

1777. 4447

AD
GOLDEN TREATISE
OF
MENTAIL PRAIER
COMPOSED BY
Y. B. FA.
PETER DE
ALCANTARA
FRANCISCAN
TRYAR

AT BRUXELLES
By the Widowe of Hubert Antwerp
Called Valens in 1612



Verus seruus Dei F. PETRVS DE ALCANTARA Hijo. Ordinis
Minor. de Offere. S. P. Franc. Discal. fund. Prou. S. Iosaph. à qua
plures alio donarant, ac P. Spirituales B. M. Tereſia de Iefu.

A
G O L D E N T R E A T I S E
O F
M E N T A L L P R A I E R,

With diverse spirituall rules and directions,
no lesse profitable then necessarie
for all sortes of people.

First composed by the venerable and blessed Fa-
ther, F R. P E T E R D E A L C A N T A R A,
of the Seraphicall Order of S. Francis. Beatified
the 18. of Aprill. 1622.

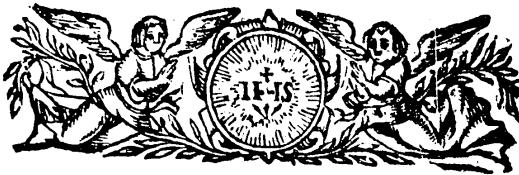
Translated into English by G. VV.

To vvhich is prefixed a breife relation of the life, and
death of the same Father vvritten by G. VV.
of the same Order and obseruance.



A T B R V X E L L E S,
By the Widowe of H V B E R T A N T O N E, called
Velpius, sworne Printer of the Court, at the
signe of the golden Eagle by the
Palace. 1632.

Permissu Superiorum.



TO THE RIGHT
HONOURABLE
AND TRVELY
VERTVOVS LADY,
THE LADY
ELIANOR
POWES, &c.

*All prosperitie in this vworld,
and euerlastinge glorie in
the vworld to come.*

A D A M,


Although the
greatnes of your
blood doth chalenge much
a 3 ref.

THE EPISTLE
respect, yet I knowe by ex-
perience, that your LADI-
SHIP thinketh vertue to be
only and true nobilitie; and
that to be Gods seruāt, you
esteeme it your greatest
glorie. This therfore ver-
tuous and religious disposi-
tiō of yours, beinge the on-
ly loadstone that drayveth
my affection to loue, and
honour you, hath embol-
dened me to present vnto
your LADISHIPS vclivve,
this little treatise of men-
tall prayer, vwith the life of
the Authour, vwhich longe
since, and alwayes from

the

DEDICATORIE.
the first time I tooke it in
hand, I intēded to shrowde
vnder the vwinges of your
protection, but beinge hin-
dred by some occasions,
vherin holy obediēce
hath emploied me; I could
neuer compas my desirē
till nowe. I nowe ther-
fore send it to your LADI-
SHIP desiringe you to ac-
cept of it, not for my de-
seretes, vwhich indeede haue
bene none to claime such
a fauour, but for the digni-
tie of the matter of vwhich
it treateth (though I am
afraied made much vorse

24 by

THE EPIST. DEDIC.
by my vnskilfull pen) as
also for the sanctitie of the
Authour vwho made it, and
your LADISHIP vvill in-
crease my many obliga-
tions to vvardes you, and
alvvayes oblige me to rest
and remaine.

M A D A M,

Your honors poore beadzman,

GILES VVILLOVGHY.



A
BREIFFE RELATION
O F
THE LIFE AND DEATH
O F
THE BLESSED FATHER
F R. P E T E R D E
A L C A N T A R A,
F R A N C I S C A N F R Y A R.

Written by G. VV. of the same Order &
obseruance.

THE PROLOGUE.



Isericordias Do-
mini in æternum
cantabo. (a) I will (a) Psalms.88.
sing the mercies of
our Lord for euer, saith that
Kingly Prophet D A V I D:
And

THE PROLOGUE.

And not without cause: for so great and vnspeakable, are the mercie-worke's of the almighty; which out of the bowells of his infinite goodnes, he hath shewed to mankinde from the first instant of his creation, that the tongues of men and Angells are never able to expresse them.

How wonderfull was this benefit; that creatinge man after his
(b) Gen. 1. oþne (b) image and likenes, (c) he
26. (c) Magister would haue made him partaker of
sent. lib. 2. eternall felicitie, and vested with
dist. 20. (d) Gabriel. his originall iustice, vwithout (d)
lib. 2. dist. 19. quest. vnic, death or any passage by misery would
ari. 2. haue associated him with the com-
panie of Angells, if he had not, by
his oþne default, violated the
lawes of his creatour? not with-
standinge this act of malice, the
diuine

THE PROLOGUE.

diuine clemencie would not suffer
the worke of his powerfull handes,
so to perish: but he accordinge to
the diuersitie of times, (e) alwaies (c) scotus lib.
ordeined opportune remedies, to re- 4. dist. 1. q. 2.
duce wanderinge man to the right
way of his oþne saluation. Nowe
manifestinge his diuine pleasure by
the meanes of Angels: nowe sen-
dinge the Patriarchs replenished
with his heauenly grace, who by
their good example, might stirr
them vp to pietie: then sendinge the
Prophets illuminated with his holy
spirit, not only to preach the present
benefits exhibited to mankinde, but
also to foretell the future incarna-
tion of the Sonne of God, with the
mysterie of his death and passion,
by meanes of which man should
be loosed from the power of Sathan,
and

THE PROLOGUE. and eas'd of the heauy loade of his transgressions.

Thus farr hath that impene-
trable abyſſe of the diuine clemencie,
sweetly disposed all thinges, requi-
site for the sauinge of the ſoule of
man. But if we will extend our
thoughtes a little further, and call
to mind the great benefits, ſtill
heaped vpon man, after the ascen-
ſion of our blessed Sauiour, we ſhall
 finde them innumerable. VVho is
not aſtoniſhed at the vocation of
mankinde, that the Apoſtolicall
trumpet of a fewe men, ſoundinge
to humane eares, the Euangelicall
trutb, through the wholl world,
ſhould rouze vp (f) ſoules makinge
thē* happy & thrice happy to for-
ſake all worldly vanities? to be-
adipſceretur: take themſelues to a ſtate of per-
fection;

fection; to ſell all they haue and
givē to the poore: to liue in perpe-
tuall chauſtitie, and ſimple obedience:
to ſpend their dayes in rigorous pe-
nance, watchinge, fastinge and
prayer, and finally to renounce all
the ſeeminge pleasures (for (g) true
there are none) which the flatte-
ringe world could afford vnto the.

These thinges are dayly putt
in practice by many, who profeffe
the goſpell of Christ. For where
Catholique Religion flouriſheth,
we ſee diuerſe Monasteries of
men and women, filled with reli-
gious ſoules, who confeſcate them-
ſelues a perpetuall ſacrifice to the
almightie.

How many religious doe vve
ſee honoured vwith Preiſtly fun-
ction, (an office requiringe more
then

THE PROLOGUE.

Placit de bono then humane (h) puritie and a
fæt. relig. l. 3. burchen scarcely to be supported by
cap. 1. (h) Quo non oparet esse Angels shoulders) executinge their
puriorem tali charge vwith great integretie of
strenue sacri- ficio? quo sola- minde, carefull of their ovvne, and
ri radio non splendidiorem Zealous of the sauinge of their
manū carnem neighbours soules, vvhio by their
banc diuiden. repletur, lin- preach to the Christian vworld a
guā qua tre- mendo nimis reformation: vylko spare noe paines
sanguine ru- bescit. sic D. or tedious trauells, to propagate the
Chrys. hom. 83. in Mat.
faith

And Pope Gelasius vwritinge to Elpidius Bishop, doth
excellently set dovvne the great purity required to
Preistly function sayinge: *Sacrosancta Religio que Catholico-
cam continent disciplinam, tantam sibi reverentiam vendicat, vt ad
eam quilibet nisi pura conscientia, non audeat peruenire: nam
quomodo ad diuini mysterij consecrationem celestis spiritus inno-
carus aduenias, si sacerdos & qui eam adesse depreceatur crimi-
nalis plenus astromibus reprobetur?* l. q. 1. e. SACROSANTA.
Although a vicked Preist doth consecrate and admini-
ster the Sacramentes truely, yet he sinneth greiuiously in
eōslectinge, & administratinge vvhich vorthily, *Sacrificia impiorum eis ipsi soberunt qui offerunt impie.* l. q. 1. c. PER ISAIAM,
necessitatis est, vi esse munda studet manus, que diluere fordes car-
ret: ne tacta queque deteritis inquinet, si fardida ipsa fercoris lu-
sum teneret. Greg. in regeslo. b. 1. Epist. 24. Et ponitur l. qu 1 cap.
NECESSITAS EST.

THE PROLOGUE.

faith of IESVS CHRIST, to
beathens and infidells; vvhio coura-
giously labour in God almighty's
vineyard, exposinge their lynes for
the name of IESVS. Indies
both east and west are vvitnesses
of their zealous and heroick spi-
rits, therē they sealed the truth of
the gospell vwith the effusion of
their sacred blood. Yea vhat actes
memorable in the church of God

are there, vvhetherin (i) these men (i) Hieron.
hauē not had a very greate stroke. Platus de bo-
no statutus re-
lig. l. 2. c. 30.
And finally they so well employ, and
multiply those talentes, vvhich the
great commaunder of heauen and
earth, hath bestowed vpon them
here, that assuredly they may ex-
pect an eternall revvard in the
Kingedome of heauen hereaf-
ter.

But

THE PROLOGUE.

(k) Nuptie
replet terram
virginitas
paradisum. D.
Hieron.
(l) Flos est il-
le Ecclesiastici
germinis, de-
cuss atque or-
namentū gra-
cie spiritua-
lis, leta, indo-
lis, laudis &
bonoris, opus
integrum atq;
incorruptum,
Dei imagore
spondens, ad
sanct moniam
Dñi, illustrior
portio gregis
Christi, gau-
det per ipsas,
atque in illis
largiter floret
S. Matris E. c
clesiae gloriofa
fecunditas,
quantoq; plus
gloriofa vir-
ginitas nu-
mero suo ad-
dit, tanto plus
gaudium ma-
tris augescit.
Cypr de habet.
virs. l. 4 c. 24

But that which is more admirable, to see a multitude of the weaker sexe, to abandon all worldly pleasures: they who in the world might haue swoome in brauery, and haue had all thinges at their owne commaund; to inclose themselues in a retired Cloister, there to spend their dayes in penance, and to consecrate the very flower of their springinge youth, a sweet smellinge sacrifice to their celestiall spouse CHRIST IESVS. These truly are those that (k) fill and beautifie the garden of paradise with lillies of puritie: these are the (l) flowers of our holy mother the Catholique Church, which make her glorious and fruitfull. These are they, that make that happy chaunge, amo-

mor-

THE PROLOGUE.

mortall crowne of glorie.

Thus we see perpetuall rivers streaminge from the fountaine of God almighty m rcie. But let vs descend a little further into his abundant charitie, and take notice of his fatherly prouidence, that in process of declininge times, when the blood of our redeemer, bath of rentimes begun to wax cold in the hearts of men, he would not suffer it altogether to be extinguished, but accordinge to varietie of times, never ceased to repaire his church by the ministery of some elected seruants, whom he sent into this world as second Apostles, who by their example, and doctrine might drawe men out of the mire of their sinnes, renewe the feruour of our blessed Saviour's passion, and reduce collapsed

b disci-

THE PROLOGUE.
discipline to her former rigour:
Many hath he sent for this end, and
amongst many this blessed Saint,
S. PETER DE ALCAN-
TARA, a man from his very
cradle consecrated to Evangelicall
perfection; he was a faithfull labou-
rer in our Lords vineyard, with
great fidelitie performinge his com-
manded taske, as it will plainly ap-
peare by that which followeth in
his life.



CHAP.

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CHAP. I.
OF THE BIRTH
AND
EDUCATION,
OF BLESSED
ALCANTARA,
And of his enteringe into
Religion.

His blessed Saint was borne at (a) Norba Cesa-
rea, vulgarly called ALCANTARA, in the yeare
of our Lord 1499. in the
reigne of Pope ALEXANDER the
sixth, and FERDINANDO Catholique
Kinge of Spaine. His Father was called
BACHILIER GARAVITO, and
his Mother MARIA VIELELA
DE SENABRIA, both of good
qualitie, but especially honoured for
their vertues.

(a) *Civitas Hispaniae mi-
litia ordinis
Alcantarenis
clara. Iste or-
do proue con-
stat expri-
illi concess-
an. Dñi 1174.
fuit institutus
a Dño Gome-
sio Heyndes
tempore Fer-
dinandi 2. re-
gno. & appro-
batus ab eis.
3. anno 3. G
1174. 2. 3. 1174.
qq. Reg. id. 1174.
qq. Reg. id. 1174.*

The life

They brought vp their younge Sonne in the feare of God, and sowed in him the seedes of vertue ; they put him to schoole where, as he profited in learninge, so his obedience towards his parentes did likwise increase. Although he was a child, yet he withdrew himselfe from the common sportes of chil-dren, and sorted himselfe amongst men, whome he sawe inclined to deuotion. In these his tender yeares he addicted himselfe, to the workes of mercie : he applied himselfe seriously to learne the Christian doctrine : he often visited churches, and holy places, he frequen-ted the Sacrametes, and continually em-ploied himselfe in good workes : all which did abundantly presage his fu-ture sanctitie , but more confirmed it, by that which followed immediately, for he was skarce sixtene yeares of age, when, before he knewe, he began to loath the world, and when the younge sparkes of his vertues began to breake into a flame of deuotion. He opened the dores of his soule to the inspirations of the holy Ghost : and as he excelled his fellowe studentes in science , so he knewe that all (b) science , was igno-rance without the right knowledge of God.

(b) *quid pro-fuerit ea que agenda sunt scire ei, qui ea ad opus non perdat: ut. D. Crys. bo. 13. et Rom.*

of blessed Alcantara.

God. Therfore from that time forward he applied his minde to heauenly wise-dome , and busied himselfe cheifly to knowe what should be most acceptable to his sacred Maiestie.

About that time, there was a famous and reformed monastery of FRANCIS-CANS in the prouince of S. GABRIEL, three miles from VALENTIA, whe-ther he addressed himselfe , there to bringe his good desires to a ioyfull pe-riode. But as he went alonge towards this place, he came to a great riuver, cal-led Tiartar , which without boate, was impossible to be passed ouer. He seeinge this vnexpected barr, to stop his happy iournie, looked about, hopinge to espye some waterman , who might carry him ouer , but when he could see none , to giue him any assistance : he cast his eies to heauen , and with great anxietie la-manted this ynhappie hindrance. Behold! vpon the suddaine (as he himselfe related) (c) he was miraculously traspor-ted on the other side of the riuver, with- in eius vita cap. 1.

This miracle was not vnlike to that, when the riuver of Iordane stood still for the Children of ISRAEL to pass;

b 3 or

The life

or when S. P E T E R walked vpon the waues of the sea: and indeed, it was no small beginninge of God almighty's many fauours, exhibited to this blessed Saint.

This obſtacle beinge remoued, he passed the other part of his way, (the holy Ghost beinge his guide) without any difficultie, and at length arived to his desired harbour, this ſolitarie monaſterie, ſituated amonſt great rocks, which they comonly call *Los Mameſedes*, where he came to the Fathers, and asked the habit of S. F R A N C I S of them, who did graunt it to him with as much charitie, as he begged it with humilitie.

But when this blessed Saint conſidered his poore habitacion, ſequeſtred from the compaie of men, and abſtracted from all worldly tumoultes. And when he ſaw himſelfe vefted in his penitentiall weede, we may well imagine with what meditatiōs he purred himſelfe forward in God almighty's ſervice. He ſpake to his owne ſoule these or the like wordes, behold, thou haſt nowe accōpliſhed thy deſire, thou art nowe arriued to the land of promiſe, and climed vp to the

(d) hi- ,

of blessed Alcantara.

(d) highest mountaine of God al- , (d) *Hec terres* mighties fauour to mortall ma in this , *montuosa*, *in* vale of misery (that is) the ſacred ſtate , *in ſublimi ſitio* of a religious life , where , by howe , *ta quaeruntur* & *delicijs ſaculi* much more thou art ſequeſtred from , *vacas* *cauſo* the pleaſures of the flatteringe world , , *maiores habet* the more thou enioyest the fredome , *delicias ſpiri- tus*. *D. Hier.* of thy ſpirit. Thou art nowe come to , *l. 1. Epiftola* the houſe of God, in which it is better , *rum. Epift. 3.* for the to be an abieſt then to dwell , *ad Sufficien- tiam*, in the courtes of Princes; all occasions , of offendinge thy creatour are nowe , taken a way , thy ſoule is nowe ſure , not to be defiled with the pitch of , euill conuerſation. Thy compaie , nowe are (e) terreftriall Angels , who , (e) *quo nomi- nes* though they liue on earth , yet they , *ne* *appellentur* haue their conuerſation in heauen, all , *neſcio, homi- nes caeleſtes* whose actions incite thee to nothinge , *an Angelos* else but to aspire vnto perfection. , *terreftriaſ de-* Thou findest here no ſnares to en- , *gentes in ter- rangle thee in worldly vanities , no* , *ris, ſed con-* flatterers to applaud thee when thou , *uerſationem* doſt offend , or any thinge else to , *calis. D. Ber-* withdrawe thy affection from the , *nard. ſerm. ad* Cross of C H R I S T. Thy beloved , *fratres de* spouse hath brought thee nowe into , *monte Del.* this holy deſert , to recreat thy ſoule , with his heauenly conſolatiōs (f) here , (f) *Animas* & abſtracted from all worldly tumoults , , *corporeis cu-*

The life

or when S. P E T E R walked vpon the waues of the sea: and indeed, it was no small beginninge of God almighty's many fauours, exhibited to this blessed Saint.

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(d) hi- ,

of blessed Alcantara.

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The life

piditatibus li- it may attēd only to diuine wisedome, tera in aula & the noise of all temporall cares, be- mentis posse diuina vacare inge hist & silent, it may be wholly, Sapientia, vbi omni spiritu rauished with eternall pleasures. God, terrenarum almighty hath nowe wasted thee, silente car- over this troublesome sea, and placed, rationibus thee heere, in the quiete harbour of, Janitis, & in thy saluation, in which state in respect, delicis late- of thy former, thou art farr more, tur aeternis. S. Leo in ser: sure to (g) fall seldomer, rise sooner, & S. de ieiunio stand more securely, liue more, 10. mensis, & eleem sweetly, and dye more confidently., (g) In Reli- Goe too, I say, why standest thou, gione homo still? why camest thou hether? Con- viuit purius, sider thy course habit, and see what, cadit rarius, surgit velo- penance it exacteth? Looke vpon, cius, incedit the place, and reflect what spirit it, cauicius, quies teacheth thee? be courageous and, cit securius, irroratnr cre- make no delay, thy death is certaine, brius, purga- and thy hower vncertaine, the iudge is, tur citius, mo. at hand, (h) Alas! the pleasure of this, ritar confide- world is short, but the punishment for, tius, manera- tur copiosius. it perpetuall. A little sufferinge here, Idem. Hom. and infinite glorie hereafter. Thus, simile est re- this newe soldiar of C H R I S T spent gnū alorum, his tinc, in holy discourses, sometimes homini nego- of God almighty's maiestie, sometimes riatori. (h) S. Fr. vero of his owne miserie: although his pre- ta extort. ad cedent conuersation to Religion was a frutes.

mit.

of blessed Alcantara.

mirroure of perfection, yet he stooode not still in that grace, he had already gotten, but continually aspired to higher, in which he farr excelled his fellowe nouices. Two vertues were cheifly eminent in him: simplicitie and puritie. He likwise had a perfect obliuion of all wordly thinges. He greedily desired, and willingly accepted of the inferiour, and basest employmemente of the monasterie. Neither did he esteeme it a dis honour to him to cast himselfe at the feete of the Friers, but was most willinge to serue euery one at their beck. In this his first yeare he laied such groundes of humilitie, that in his wholl life after he was a rare example, and patterne of this vertue. Neither when he was promoted to superioritie, did he leave of his humble exercises. Thus goinge from grace to grace, from vertue to vertue, his good example was a burninge lampe to giue others light, to immitate his vertues, that the wholl monasterie began euerie day more and more to flourish in regulare obseruance, and in the opinion of the world, to get a great name of sanctitie.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

*Of his naturall gifts, and of his
prudence, and mortification of
bis eies.*

HE was an elected vessell, beautified with all the iewells of vertues, and as his minde was replenished with supernaturall gifts, so his bodie wanted not its naturall graces. He was of a spare bodie, but comely, he had a graue and modest looke, his eies were sparklinge, tokens of the fire of diuine loue, which was in his soule inuisible to the eie. There was not one member in that man, which was not subordinate to the rule of reason. His speech was meeke and humble, his conuersation Angelicall. He had an excellent naturall witt, ioyned with a happy memorie: he had likewise a singular good judgement (as appeared in his government:) he was couragious in goinge through with busines which did tend to God Almights honour and the good of religion: he was gratefull to all, giuinge

of blessed Alcantara.

uinge to euerie one their due respect: he was dexterous in his actions, modest in correctinge: and a peace maker, reconcilinge those who vpon any occasion, had bone atthers. In his sermons he was hott but mouinge: in hearinge of confessions he was a helper, a counsailer, and a comforter: in his ordinary speech he was not fawninge, nor bitinge, and his conuersation without any pertinacie: and to conclude all in a fewe wordes: he was a man of an other world, of whome we may justly say as (a) ALEXANDER HALENSIS saied of S. BONAVENTURE. That he was a man, in whome Adam seemed nor to haue sinned. He was a reformer, Prelate, Member, and patterne of perfection, of the Seraphicall Order of our holy Father S. FRANCIS, who through so many Provinces, and remote Kingedomes, illustrated this sacred institution; as an other Apostle preordained by God Almighty for this happy end.

(a) Antonius Possenius in Sa-ro appara-tu de scripto-ribus Eccles. tom. 1. de D. Bonavent. 1610.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Of his religious simplicitie, and mortification of his eies.

BUT to descend to particulars, wherin his religious simplicitie was manifested. He was so absorbed in God almighty, that he minded nothinge of exterior things. When he was a younge brother keepeinge the keyes of the pauntrie, for the space of six months, there was in the pauntrie grapes and pomgranades, which lay so palpably, that none could chooze but see the, but he for that space neither sawe, nor smelt, much lesse touched them: beinge asked why he did not giue them vnto the brothers, he humbly answered, that he knewe of none that were there. An other time, liuinge fower yeares in an other cloister, he never tooke notice of a great tree which stood in the middest of the court, which was obvious to every ones eie. Being a yeare in an other place, and asked what his cell was made of, he answered,

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swered, he knew not whether it was of stone, or brick, or wood. And a chappell vwhich he frequented aboue others, yet he knevve neither situation, forme, or any ornament vwhich did belongethervnto. He vvas vizont to say to blessed T H E R E S I A his ghostly child, that he knevve never a brother in his monasterie, but only by his speech. Moreouer he vvas so mortified in his eies, that vyhere soever he vvas, he knevve no difference in places, no distance of cells, and finally he vvas a dead man to all exterior things. Neither vvas this mortification any stupiditie of nature, or want of senses, but his continuall busynge his thoughts vpō God almighty, a more noble, and higher obiect. Who could but thinke this chast child of S. F R A N C I S to haue made a couenant vwith his eies, not to behold a virgin? and vwell he might be ffiled that sonne of a doue, vvhose eies vvere vvalched vwith the milke of innocency. He kept such a continuall guard ouer his eies, that he never knevve any vwoman by her face. There vvas a certaine noble matron famous for her vertue, vvhose name was vront at P L A C E N T I A, some times to visite the holy Father, for his spi-

The life

spirituall counsell she meetinge him at
A B V L A , saluted him , and expressed
to him the difficulties of her state , he
modestly denied , that he euer savve the
vvoman. If euer he opened his eies , it
vvas in the quire , though he had so
good a memory , that he knevve most
part of the office vwithout booke. Be-
inge Superior he did particularly cor-
rect this imperfection vwith seueritie.
Knowvinge, nothinge to be more preju-
diciall to the soule , then to set open
those vwindovves, at vwhich, doth enter
the greater part of sinne , that doth de-
file the heart of man.



CHAP.

of blessed Alcantara.

CHAP. IV.

*VVith what auferitie and mor-
tification the holy Father
lived.*

BECAUSE for the most part this
holy Father liued in solitarie
conuentes, most remote from
vworldly tumoults , or rather heremita-
ges, all his rigourous penance , could
not be taken notice of by any. Neuer-
theleſſ vve vwill sett dovvne ſome,
vwhich he could not hide from thoſe,
vwith vvhom he conuerſed.

He did vware for ſeauen yeares toge-
ther a haire ſhirt full of hard knotts,
S. T H E R E S I A affirmeſt that he
vvore it tvventie yeares.

Besides plates of Iron , and other
things vvhervvith he tyranized euer his
tender flesh. His disciplines vvere ſo fre-
quent and bloodie , that he ſeemed ra-
ther the trunke of a tree then a humaine
bodie. He vwould neuer couer his head
although it rayned neuer ſo fast, or the
sun

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sun shined never so hott. His diet was so slender, and meane, that in his youth, and old age he did eate nothinge but browne bread, and the most mustie crusts that he could finde. If sometimes he recreated himselfe with a fewe boyled hearbes, he would not be so delicious as to eate them with oyle. Beinge superiour he caused as many beanies and pease to be boyled at once, as should serue the conuent for seauen dayes together, which austertie his subiects most willingly embrased, beinge glad in some measure to immitate their cheife. But he seasoned his owne portion with ashes, or some vngratefull liquour, least his pallate should take pleasure in his meate.

Mother THERESIA hath heard his companions say, that some times he liued eight dayes together without any meate or drinke, especially when with more violence, he addidet himselfe to deuotion. For he suffered in his prayers frequent raptes and extasies, of which (faith she) I am wittnesse. He never drake wine, but water, though for the infirmtie of his stomach it was prescribed to him by the Phisitian: but he constantly refused it layinge that nothinge was so

repu-

of blessed Alcantara.

repugnant to holy pouertie, and abstinence, as flesh and wine, the one beinge an enemy to chastitie, the other to contemplation, both which, as longe as he liued, by Gods grace he would enjoy. I will sett downe for the satisfaction of the deuout reader the wordes of euer blessed THERESIA, the glorie and foundresse of the discalfed Carmelites, to whome he was some times ghostly Father, of whome she confesserh to haue receiued much spirituall comfort; whose authoritie, by reason of her renowned sanctitie, and liuinge at the same time with him, is without controull.

Her wordes be these. (a) God almighty (a) *Ex vita*
bereaued vs of a man of admirable example, B. *Theresa*
vven he tooke out of this life, Father P-

TER OF ALCANTARA, the vworld
it seemeth could endure no longer so great
perfection, they say that our health is not
so good, that novve those times be past, this
holy man was of this time, he was farr in
spirit, as those of other ages, he had also
the vworld vnder his feete, for though vve
doe not goe barefoote, nor doe such austere
penance as he did, there are many thinges (as
I haue saied else where) to treate dovyne the
vworld vvit all. And our Lord teacheth
them, vven he seeth such a minde, as he

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gauo

The life

gave in great measure to this holy man, which I speake of, to continue 47. yeares together in such austere penance, as all knowe. I will declare some part of it, for I knowe that it is all true. He told it to me and to an other, from whence he concealed little, and the cause whiche he told it me, was the great loue whiche he bare me, and whiche our Lord gave him to defende me, and encourage me, in the time of so great necessarie, as that was, whiche I haue spoken of, and will declare further; it seemeth to me, that he told me, that he had slept no more but an hovver and halfe betwixt day and night for the space of 40. yeares, and that this was the greatest difficultie he foynd in his penance at the beginninge, to ouercome his sleepe, and for this cause he did alwayes. Either kneele or stand, and when he slept it was sittinge leaninge his head against a little peece of wood, whiche he had driuen into the wall, he could not lye dovn though he wold, for his cell as is knowne, was no longer then foyver foot and an halfe, in all these yeares he never did put on his capuce, hovr great sun-shine or raine soever it was, neither had he any thinge on his feet, nor other garment, but his habit of course cloth, without any other thinge next his skin, and this as freight as could be endured, and a short cloke of the

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of the same vpon it, he told me that when it was very cold he did putt it of, and opened the dore and little windowe of his cell, that afterward when he did putt his cloke on againe, and shutt his dore, he might giue some contentment and recreat his bodie, whiche before was frozen with cold. He did very ordinarily eate but once in three dayes; and he asked me at what I maruailed, for it was verie possible, for one that accustomed himselfe to it. His pouerty was extreme, and likevise his mortification in his youth, &c. With all his sanctitie he was verie affable, though he vsed not many wordes, if he were not spoken too, for then he was verie pleasantinge, hainge a good vnderstandinge. And a little after. His end was like his life preaching and admonishinge his Fryars. When he sawe deare dravve nighe, he said the Psalme: Lætatus sum in his quæ dicta sunt mihi; and kneelinge dovn departed. Since our Lord hath let me enjoy him more then in his life, giuinge me aduise and counsell in many thinges I haue scene him many times in exceedinge great glorie; the first time he appeared vnto me, he saied: O happy penance which did merit such a reward! and many other thinges. A yeare before he died, he appeared to me beinge absent, and I knewe that he should dye, and I sent him word beinge some leagues

The life

from hence. When he gaue vp the ghost, he appeared to me and sayed, that he wuent to rest, I beleueed it not, I told some of it, and eight dayes after the newnes came that he was dead, or rather began to liue for euer. Behold here but austertie endeth with so great glorie, he seemed to comfort me more nowre, then when he was in this world. Our Lord told me once, that nothinge should be asked in his name, which he woulde not heare. I haue seene many thinges fulfilled which I haue desired him to aske of our Lord; he be blessed for euer. Amen. And in the 30. Chapter of her life she sayeth as followeth: Our Lord vouchsafed to remedy a great part of my trouble, and for that time the wholl, by bringinge to this place the blessed Father PETER OF ALCANTARA, of whome I haue alreadie made mention, and spoken somethinge of his penance, for amongst other thinges, I was certified, that for 20. yeares he had worn a cilice of plate continually. He is the authour of certaine little booke of prayer, which are now much vsed in the spanish tongue, for as one, that hath exercised it wvell he wroote very profitably, giwinge most excellent rules to those, who addicte themselves to prayer. He obserued the first rule of S. FRANCIS with all rigour, and other thinges which I haue related before. Thus she. And so much

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much shall suffice to speake of, but part of his rigourous penance, it was his fervent zeale, and loue of God, not strenght of bodie, which made this crabbed way of penance easie to his ~~high~~ ^{holy} spirit: whose example may (though not in so great a measure as he did) iustly moue vs, to shake of that old and selfe-loue excuse of ours, in sayinge, our bodies are weake, when alas! our willes are frozen, and so nice, that we are afraid to expose our careasse but to a poore triall;

(b) Non quia
the heathen SENECA will check our
difficilia que-
indeuotion, who sayeth: (b) Not because
dam sunt, ideo
certane thinges are hard, therfore we dare
not doe them, but because we dare not doe
them, therfore they are hard.

The life

C H A P. V.

Of his great puritie, and humilitie.

THE man of God increasinge in his rigorous penance, did not only mortifie in part, but wholly subdued his passions, and made his sensēs subordinate to the rule of reason, he sufferedd nothinge to enter into his soule, which might separate, or in the least kinde withdrawe his affectiō from his beloued spouse, for (as much as was possible for pilgrime man) he enjoyed the spirit of God; golden peace and diuine consolation farr vpon his wings of contemplation, and where others make their bodies masters, he made his a slave vnto his spirit. Hence it came to pass, that many of both sexe, drawne with the fragrāt odour of his vertues, flocked to him, as to an other Apostle, to whose counsells and admonitions they obeyed, as to a diuine oracle.

Vpō a time the count O R A P S A N E a devout nobleman, came to visit him.

And

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And fallinge into discourse, how much God almighty was moued with the sins of the world, out of his zeale breaketh into these speeches. O Father! what doe you thinke? what will be come of this wicked world? doe you thinke the diuine justice, can conteine it selfe any longer from reuenge? behold howe vertue is oppretted, and sin triumpheth? how wilfully doe we hoarde vp anger against the day of anger? to which the man of God modestly answered and sayed, noble Sir, doe not afflict your selfe, a remedy will easily be found to cure this disease, the point of the difficultie consisteth only in you and me, for the generall perdition of mankinde, floweth from this fountaine, that all and euery one dissemblinge or cloakinge their owne sins, accuse the wholl, when the wholl can not be said to sin at all, but particular persons in the wholl. Wherfore men crye out against the wickednesse of the word, that all are naught, and none that doe good, when if they would but looke into their owne particular, they should finde matter enough of sorrowe, and to moue them selues to doe penance for their owne faults: but nowe because they blame the wholl,

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wholl, they neglect their owne particulaires, and iustifie themselues with a sotish presumption. Therfore, noble Sir, let your Lordship, and I mend one a peece, and then a great part of the world wilbe amended, we shall appease the angry iudge, and repaire a great part of the ruine of mankinde by our good example.

When C H A R L E S the fifth recollected himselfe in a certaine monasterie of the H I E R O N Y M I T E S, vnderstandinge of the sanctitie and integrety of this holy Father, he sent for him, with an intent to make him his ghostly Father. But he hūbly refusinge so great an honour, alleaged some reasons, why he thought this employmēt not to be fittinge for him. At which deniall the Emperour beinge a little moued, with anger, saied, we charge you, Father, that you would take care of our soule. He seeinge this suddaine alteration of C E S A R, fell downe at the feete of his maiestie, and earnestly desired him, to differre the busines to what day or houre he would please to appoint, that in the meane time he might cōmend it to God almighty; which the Emperour graunted, then he tooke his leaue of the Emperour,

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perour, and saied, this renouned C E S A R, shalbe a signe vnto you, that it is not accordinge to God almighty's will, which you haue desired, if I doe not retourne at the appointed time. Then passinge to his former solitude, as he went, he complained with many sighes and groanes, to God almighty, fearinge by the diuises of Sattan, to be drawne from the embrasinges of his beloued spouse C H R I S T I E S V S. He sent vp his fervāt prayers to the almighty throne, and saied these like wordes: Lord, I haue, not therfore left the world, and betaken my selfe to this holy desert, that, now at length my name should be renowned in a Princes court, and liue, in honour, that am a poore F R A N C I S C A N F R Y A R. Why should, my eares be troubled with the flatte, rings of courtiers, who came to speake my fault in religion? I confess that, this office may be exercised without, sinne, but whether it be expedient, for my soule, sweet I s v s, tell me, and when he entred into his cell, Lord, I beseech thee pull me not from, hence, whether thy omnipotent hand, hath brought me. Here I am safe, here, I am rich; because I enjoy thee who, alone,

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alone canst satiate my soule. Alas! with-,,
out thee what is the wholl empire? , and with thee this poore cell , is a , Kingdome of contēt. Here let me liue: , Here let me die. Lord let it please thee , what I wish for, because all is thine, , what soeuer I desire. If thou grantest , me my petition, let this be a signe vnto , me, that C E S A R molesteth me no , more. So risinge, as beinge heard, did appeare no more before him. Neither did theEmperour euer solicite him after,

The same request did the illustrious Princesse I O H A N N A, sister to P H I L-
I P the second, Catholique Kinge of *Spaine* , make vnto this holy Father, whome he likewise denied after the same manner. Thus whilst he fled honours, he was most honoured of all, and reverenced of euery one.

And what candide synceritie he vſed, in contemninge profferred honours, men of no ſmall qualitie obſerued, that thofe who honoured him, he would no more regard their ſpeech then a ſimple ideot, and would labour to diuert them from that, to ſome other diſcourse. He had rather be called a ſinner then a holy man, and he himſelfe would (but without ſcandal) lay open to the world his im-

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imperfections, vnder vvhich, his vertues and graces vvere cloaked. But God the ſearcher of ſecrets , by hovve much he did ſtrive to hide them , the more he made his fame to ſhine in the vworld, to the aſtoniſhment of all. For he vwas a man vvhomē God had choſen accor- dinge to his ovne heart, by vvhofe in- duftrie , and from vvhofe ſpirituall loines did ſpringe, many great ſeruantes of I E S V S C H R I S T , and many re- novvned martyrs of our holy Order.



CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

*Of his fervant prayers and raptures,
& of his spirit of prophesie.*

GOD almighty was alwayes present with him, and he with God. His soule was like a fyerie fornace, made hott with the fuell of the crosse of C H R I S T. It was not in his owne power, to conteine himselfe, but what thinge soeuer he either sawe, or heard, which might delight his beloued I E S U S, though it were but a farr of, his heart stringes would beginne to treble, and his vitall spirits leaue him, and frequently fall into extasie. He was accoustomed for a wholl houre together, to say his prayers with his armes stretched out in manner of a crosse, sightinge and weeping, till at last he would be besides himselfe, eleuated from the ground, and vnitid only to his God. He was often-times in this manner rapt, when he was in the quire at mattins. But his deuotion was much more augmented at the aulter, when he celebrated the dreadfull sacrifice,

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fice, then would riuers of teares gush in abundance from his venerable eyes, that would moue the most stonic and obdurate heart of any of the standers by, vnto compunction. After masse he would withdrawe himselfe into his cell, where he hath beene often heard to haue had greuious conflicts with deuils: who oftentimes appearinge in a visible shape, would followe him vp and downe with a terrible furie.

In talkinge of God almighty, his soule would be presently inebriated with diuine sweetnes, and ascendinge by degrees from one word to an other, as, what was God incarnated for me? was God made man for me? was God vested with humane flesh for me? and the like. He would forthwith breake into exclamations, and hurryinge himselfe into his cell, would for the space of aboue three howers together, loose the vse of his senses. (a) One day, a brother, that was newly made Preist, practisinge in the garden to singe masse, when he heard him singe these wordes of S. I O H N S gospell. (*Et Verbum caro factum est.*) He was eleuated into the aire two cubits high, and flew through lower dores with the violence of this motion, at length

(a) *Mariam in vita B. Alcant. cap. 10.*

The life

length settinge himselfe vpon his knees, before the blessed Sacrament for a longe space together remained in extasic.

This therfore vvas ordinarie to the freind of God, that vwhen he heard any thinge of the humanitie of our blessed Sauour, or any deuout vword of the holy Scripture, it vwould cause him raptures. Neither could he help them, though he did striue much against them, especially in the presence of others, but his heart vwould become like meltinge vvaax in the middest of his bovvells. He vvas often in seinge the Crucifix, moued vwith such compassion that his armes a cross vwould be rapt, vwith little cloudes glitteringe about his heade.

He would some times prophesie, to some the loss of honours, to others sudden death, to other purgatorie. Which would fall out the verie day and howet he told them.

The first time he sawe S. THERESE. he told her what contradictions and afflictions she suffered from her ghostly Fathers, and other spirituall persons, who would needs perswade her, that she was seduced. And more over, that she was to suffer much more, in the same kinde. He likewise for-

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forfeold what should be successe in the Indies.

CHAP. VII.

Of his patience.

HE traced the st̄eps of our bleſſed Sauour, and all his gloriouſ ſaints, (a) all vvhich did neuer merit their crovnes vwithout carryinge of the croſs of C H R I S T.

He vvas an other patient I O B, in ſufferinge the temptatiōs and affliktiōs, the infirmitic of man is ſubie& vnto, he vvas in a particulare manner loadē vwith the heauie burthen of them, notwithstandinge his ſeruant ſpirit, patiently ſupported, and victoriously triumphed ouer all his difficulties maugre all the force of Sathan. His frequent combates, his perſecutions, his ſicknes, his longe and tedious trauells, the diſculties he did vndergoe in erectinge his prouince, vwould take vp too much time to relate. He vvas ſo greedie of ſufferinge, that he eſteemed himſelfe happy, to bare

(a) *Quid ſanctorum fine patientia coronans? ſolus in deliciis ſalomon fuit, ergo ideo forteſſe corruit. Dico Hieron.*

The life

bare afflictions for the name of I x s v s, sayinge, that there vvas no vway so sure and easie to attaine vnto perfection, as the carryinge of the crois of C H R I S T. He vwould therfore begge of God almighty that he might neuer be vwithout some affliction. Thus did our courageous champion trample vpon all his

(b) *Psal. 90.* enemies. (b) He kicked the *Aspe* and *Basiliske*, he vwalked vpon the *Lion* and the *Draggon*, vvhilest he vanguished all his toes, not so much by resistinge, as by sufferinge.



CHAP.

of blessed Alcantara.

CHAP. VIII.

Of his charitie towardes his neigbuur.

HI s charitie tovwardes his neigbour vvas vnspeakable, for this cause he oftē visited hospitalls to serue the sick, assistinge them both spiritually and corporally , and often-times miraculously restoringe them to their former health. After he had made an end of his deuotions , the residue of his time he spent , in comfortinge the afflicted,in cherishing the feable, and finally in any thinge he could immagine, might cōfort his neighbours, either corporally or spiritually, so that innumerable people of all conditions, and sexes continually flocked vnto him for his charitable assistance.



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CHAP.

The life

CHAP. IX.

Of his pouertie.

(a) *S. Franciscus non solam pauperatis commode fruebatur, sed etiam ita honorabat & colebat, quasi rem eximiam & cui nulla humana dignitas posset comparari. Itaq; ut D. Bonav. scribit, eam in omni sermone modo Matrem, modo Sponsam, modo Dominum appellabat, sepe etiam ren to haue nothinge in their cells but Reginam, propter quod in rege regum eiusque genitricem, adeo in-*

signiter efful-

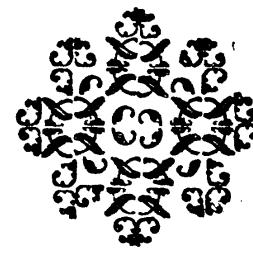
sisser. Hieron. Platus de bo- **T H E R E S I A** *vhither or no she* *no flat. relig. should found her Monasteries vwith lib. 2. cap. 3. rentes and yearly reuenues, to vwhich diuerse*

HE vvas a rigid obseruer of holy pouertie, vvhich in imitation of his patron (a) S. FRANCIS, he not only loued, but honoured so farr that he vvas vwant to call it the Euangelicall pearle, vvhervvith he enriched his nevve erected prouince, in that lustre as the obseruance vvas in the infancie of our Seraphicall Order, from vvhich time, and by vvhose example, most prouinces through the Christian world haue excelled in this particulaire point, as much as in their former splendour. He permitted his brethren of mere necessitie, and to the preachers he permitted them no more but two or three booke, vvhich the Bible and a crucifix.

He vvas vpon a time asked by S. T H E R E S I A vvhither or no she should found her Monasteries vwith diuerse

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diuerse persons of qualitie had aduised her. He ansuvered, that it vvas an iniurie to God the authour of Euangeli- call counsells, to aske the aduise of men touchinge the obseruance of them, or to doubt vvhether or no they vvere obseruable. And vvhith all encouraged her to be constant in that feruant desire, she had begun in embracinge holy pouertie. To vvhose counsell she vvillingly obeyed. And after our Lord appeared to her in prayer, and declared, that it vvas his vwill that her Monasteries should be founded in holy pouerty. His letter to her I thinke it not amisse to set dovvne at large, vvhich followveth.



d 2

A letter.

The life

*A letter of the blessed Father
FR. PETER DE AL-
CANTARA, to the holy
Mother THERESA OF
IESVS, who demanded his
counsell, whither she should
founde her Monasteries with
rents or no.*

THE holy Ghost giue you his grace and loue, &c. I received yours, deliuered me by DON GONZALES D'ARANDA. And am amazed, consideringe your zeale, and pietie: in committinge to the direction of learned lavvyers, that vwhich is no vvayes their profession, or belonginge vnto them: you should doe vwell to take their aduice concerninge the decindinge of a proces or of sutes in lavv, and temporall affaires, but in that vwhich concerns perfeⁿction of life, vve ought to treate only vwith those vwho practise the same. For such as the conscience of euerie one is, such are his exercises and vvor-

of blessed Alcantara.

vvorkes. Concerninge the Euangelicall counsells, may I deindand vvhether they be obseruable or noe? For that the counsells of God cannot be but good, neither can the obseruance therof seeme difficult, vnles to those, vwho gouerne themselues accordinge to humane prudence, hauinge lesse confidence in God then they ought. For he, vwho hath giuen the counsell, vwill consequently giue force and meanes to accomplish the same. And if your zeale and feruour dravve you to embrase the counsells of CHRIST IESVS, obserue them vwith the greatest integritie, and perfeⁿction that poisible you can: seeinge they were equally giuen to both sexes. It can not be, but the same meritt and reward will be rendered vnto you, as to others that haue truly obserued them. And if there be scene any want or necessitie in the Monasteries of poore Religious Women, it is because they are poore against their wills, and not through faulte of their vowe of pouertie, or followinge of the Euangelicall counsells. For I accoumpt not much of their simple pouertie, but of their patient suffeⁿrance of the same for the loue of God. But I more esteeme of that pouertie

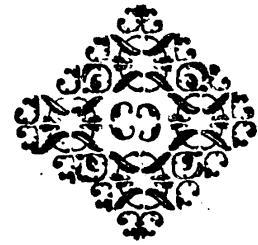
The life

which is desired, procured, and embrased for the same loue. And if I should thinke or otherwise determinatly beleue, I should not hould my selfe a good Catholique. I beleue in this, and in all other thinges taught by our blessed Sauiour, and that his counsells are good and profitable, as proceedinge frō God, and though they oblige not to sinne, they binde neuertheless that man to be more perfect that followeth them, then if he had not vndertaken them at all. I hold them poore in spirit, which are poore in will, as our Sauiour hath saied, and my selfe proued; how be it I beleue more from God the of myne owne experience, that those, who by the grace of God, are with all their hearts poore, leade a life most happie as confidinge and hoping in him alone. His diuine Maiestie giue you light to vnderstand this truth, and to practise the same. Beleeue not those that shall tell you the contrarie, for want of light and vnderstandinge, or for not hauninge tasted, how sweet our Lord is to them, that feare and loue him, renoucinge for his sake all vnecessarye things of this world, for they are enemies of the Crosse of C H R I S T, not beleeuing the

of blessed Alcantara.

the glorie which accōpanieth the same. I also pray our Lord to giue you this light, that you be not wantinge in the beleife of this truth, so much manifested. And that you take not counsell, but of the followers of C H R I S T I E S V S. Although others thinke it sufficient if they obserue the thinges they are bound vnto, yet they haue not alwayes greater vertue and perfect ion by their worke. And though the counsell bee good, yet that of our blessed Sauiour is much better. Who knowes what he counselleth and giueth grace to accomplish the same: and in the end reward to those who hope in him and not in rents and goods of the earth.

From Auila this 14. of April 1562.



The life

CHAP. X.

Of his confidence in God almighty's prouidence.

His admirable confidence in God almighty's prouidence, did accompanie his rigid and Euāgelicall pouertie, and it oftentimes miraculously appeared both at home and abrode.

(a) *Marianus in eius vita.* (a) He liued some times in the conuent of *Sancta Maria de Rosario*, which is situated in a woody place, by the riuers *Tentairis*, six Italian miles remote from any companie, at all times it was hard

(b) *Ea est itineris ad eum ob loci solitūdinem, atque viarū anfractus difficultas, ut vix resort;* but now by reason of a great accolis atque snowe, the like was not seene in the assuetis paucis memorie of man; the Monasterie was so inuironed on euery side, that the Fryars could not goe out to get their in prou. *santis* victualls, neither could any come to them to bringe prouision. They cried to heauen

of blessed Alcantara.

heauen to the Father of the poore, that beinge destitute of all humane aide, he only out of his infinite mercie would be pleased not to forsake them. The holy Father desired them to goe into the church, and settinge themselues vpon their knees, before the blessed Sacrament, to pray to God that he would put a remedy to their hard affliction. He with great confidēce animated his Bretheren, sayinge: Be couragious, Bretheren, God almighty will not be longe, he will come without delay. He had no sooner vttered these wordes, but an other most violent storne of snowe fell so fast, that frustrated their hopes of all humane assistance. But he that conteyneth not his anger longe, did not delay to comfort his afflicted childe ren. Behold! a little space after the storne was ouer, the porter heard the bell of the gate of the conuent to ringe, he went to open the dore, but espied no bodie, he retourned back againe, thinking it to be the windē, that had stirred the bell, or that his fancie seemed to heare the noise when he heard it not; checkinge himselfe with foolishnes, that he could imagine, that it was possible for any to come to the conuet in so deepe a snowe.

Whi-

The life

Whilst he was thus discoursinge with himselfe, it range againe so hard that all heard it, notwithstandinge it was a great winde. Then retourninge againe to the gate, and openinge it, he found a basket filled full of newe white bread, he looked about to see if he could espy any body, but no creature appeared, for it was a deepe snowe, where the footinge of any person could not but appeare. He left the basket, and with ioy ran backe into the conuent, to carry the good newes vnto the Fryars; who would not beleue, vntill the holy Father, commaunded all the Brothers, to goe in manner of processio, to see what God almighty had done for his seruantes: When they came, they found all true, as the porter had related to the. But their benefa&tour did nowhere visibly appear. They carried the baf-ked in, and after thankesgivinge refreshed themselues, with the bread which the Father of heauen had miraculously bestowed vpon them. Vpon which they liued many dayes, vntill the extremity of the season, was past and that they could goe out to begg almes accordinge to their custome.

(c) An

of blessed Alcantara.

(c) An other time trauailinge in the (c) ~~Marinas~~ ^{ibidem cap. 7.} extremitie of the heate of summer, vpon the mountaine vulgarly called *Siera Morena*, he, with his companion grewe so faint, for wāt offsome thinge, to quench their thirst, that they were ready to sinke vnder the burthe of their tedious iourny. He said vnto his companion: Brother, let vs betake our selues to prayer the only remedie, to incline the God of mercie to take compassion vpon our miserie. Whilst they were vpon their knees at their prayers, from a thicket came runninge out a mad bull, who made towards them amaine, they seeing themselues in this great danger of their liues, betooke themselues to flight, but the bull persued them ouer hedge and ditch, hard at their heeles, till at last he forced them to a place, where was a fountaine of water, when they came in sight of that, the bull forgettinge his former fury, stoode still like an innocent lambe, he breathed himselfe a while, and went an other way. But they admiringe this great miracle of the omnipotent, that sendeth his willd beasts to teach the poore, refreshed themselues and went on their iourny with alacrity, their soules more com-

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comforted with this vnexpected benefit of God almighty's prouidence, then their bodies strengthned with the wa-
ter which they drunk for their suste-
nance.

(d) *Marianus*
ibidem.

(d) Hauinge occasion to goe from *De las Lucuas to Del Pico*: as he was in his iournie it began to snowe, which fell so fast that it was not possible for him to goe forward or backward, so that he was enforced to remaine the wholl night in that extremitie of cold and snowe. But the ferverour of his deuotion, wherwith he implored the diuine assistance, caused him to pass ouer the night without tediousnes. But that which was more admirable. Behold! in the morninge when it was day, one might see, that the snowe did not so much as touch or wett him, but it congeled ouer his heade in a miraculouse maner like a canopie, and of each side too wales of snowe frozen in a curious manner, defended him from the iniurie of the weather, as though he had bene shatt in a beautifull chamber.

These fewe miracles I haue set downe collect out of many, which God almighty hath bene pleased to worke by the meanes of his glorious seruant.

(e) As

of blessed Alcantara.

(e) As testimonies, not only of many singular prerogatiues of graces exhibi-
tēd to this holy Father in his owne par-
ticular. But also that we admiringe these
strange and vnaccustomed manner of
God almighty's proceedinges with this
blessed man, the truth wherof beinge
cōfirmed by many approued authours.
May be incited to immitate his vertues
whome God hath honowred with the
grace of workinge miracles.

*voco quicquid
ardui aut in-
solitum supra
spē vel facul-
ta: ē miraculū
apparet, que-
dam admira-
tionē faciunt,
quædam gra-
tiam m̄gnas
benevolentia-
que conciliat
Aug. de vtili-
cred. propeſ-
nem*

C H A P.

If thou shouldest obiect vwith Caluin *in præfat. instiſ.* that the miracles of our Sainctes in the Catholique Church, are partly fained, partly diabolicall. I ansyver, that the same thinge the Pharisis obiected to our blessed Sauiour, that he cast out deuils in Beſzebub the prince of the deuils. More ouer it is most deuiliſh to blemiſh the integritie of the ancient Fathers and Saintes, vwith ſuch an impudent and foule asperſion, as thoſe vvhō vvwrote the liues of other Saintes, as Nycenus of Taumaturgus, S. Athenasius and S. Hierom, of S. Anthonie, Seuerus of S. Martine, S. Gregorie of S. Benet, S. Bernard of S. Malachias, S. Bonauenſure of S. Francis. VVhose authoritie if vve ſhould deny no faith or credit is to be giuen to any historie in the vworld. VVhich absurditie none, but men out of their vvitts, or blinded vwith malice, vwill admitt. S. Augustine confirmeth vhat I ſay. His vwordes be theſe: *An dicit
aliquis ista falsa esse miracula, nec fuisse falsa sed mendaciter
scripta, quisquis hoc dicit, si de his rebus negat, omnino vllis literis
esse credendū, potest etiā dicere nec Deos vllos curare mortalitia. De
cīuit. Dei l. 10. c. 18. Quædā facta non nisi à proteruentibus negari
poſſunt, vt ſunt miracula facta à Sylvestro corā Constantino tam in
curatione lepre eius, quā in diſputatione eius contraludeoſ: que fa-
cta tanquā celebriſima mandū non lauerant. Scit. in prol. q. 2. n. II.*

The life

CHAP. XI.

Of his knowledg in holy Scripture, and of his preaching.

HE was so well versed in the holy Scripture, that for the most part, he could repeate it without booke, and in explicatinge it, he was so cleare, and with all so mouinge that one might iudge his learninge, to be rather supernaturally infused in prayer, then naturally gotten, by the ordinarie meanes of

*(a) o quans studie (a) for he quickly learned what
velox est ser- he was taught seeinge he had the holy
mo sapientie, Ghost for his master. He wrote some
& vbi Deus magister est, spirituall workes, wherin he had a
quass citò dis- special gift of God almighty, both
citat. B. L. to direct those who tend vnto per-
fec-
fer 1. de Pe- fectiō, in their iourny towardes
esse fe. heauen, as also to inflame their wills
to aspire to that eternall good. In
this particulare science, he was cheifly
eminent and wrote profitable and
learned tracts of this matter.*

He

of blessed Alcantara.

He had such a rare gift in preaching: so inuective against sinne, and withall so comfortable, to those who were pullinge their feete out of the snare of vices, that God almighty was pleased to worke by his meanes, many wonderfull effects in the soules of his auditory.

In the city of *Abula* there was a young gentleman, that was giuen vnto, and as it were buried in all the sportes and vanities of this wicked world. But especially in the vild and pernicious loue of wanton womē. Cominge in his pompe vpō a festiuall day of that place, by chaunce mett the holy Father, who when he vnderstood of his corriuals the qualitie and sanctity of him, went towardes him with others to salute him with great respect, and withall begged his prayers, but God knoweth, with what intention, for he still obstinately remained in his filthy desires. But the holy Father in his sermon touched the soare of his soule vnto the quick (yet not reucaling any person) in so much, that the holy Ghost did so worke with him, that this prodigall child vnderstandinge the Father was to goc away from that place, the next day, made

The life

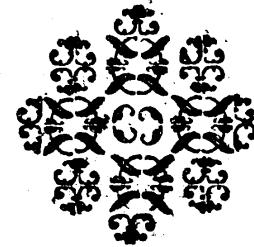
made hast, to gett pen and inke to write his sins, the next day cometh to the Father, and saluteth him, giuinge him a

(b) The longe (b) scroule of his sinfull life, and younge mā desireth him for the loue of God, that out of humilitie ma- he would vouchsafe to pray for him, nifested that God would haue mercie vpon his his sins, to soule, and that he would not punish the holy Fa- him for euer accordinge vnto his deser- gher out of tes. The holy Father receiued his the Sacra- ment of per, and promised that he would pray confession. for him. So each departed their way.

But he had scarce turned his backe, but the Father earnestly begged of God al-mightie his conuersion, of which he was presently sensible: for before he came home, the spirit of God did so inflame him, that he abiured his former conuersation, and loathed the pleasures, that before he loued so much, and beinge retourned to his house, flunge off his braue cloathes, toare his chaine from his neck, and vested himselfe in meane and country cloathes, without any shame appearinge so to all the world, all admiringe the suddaine chaunge of the right hand of the highest; and as afterward he liued well, perseueringe to the end, so he dyed happily; he dispersed his patri-

monie amongst the poore, and built many monasteries and hospitalles, as testimonies of his conuersion.

He had such efficacy in his preaching, that many common Women, drawne with the sweetnes of his spirit, chaunged their sordid and base manner of liuinge into holy and pious conuer- sation. Others as well of the nobility, as amongst the meaner sort of people, renouncing all pleasures for the loue of I E S V S, shrowded themselves in cloi- sters, where they might be secure from the contagion of worldly vanities. And many consecratinge their virginitie to their celestiall spouse, like lillies amōgst thornes, perseuered in the open world amidst the dangers therof, with immo- ueable constancie.



The life

CHAP. XII.

Of his religious zeale and of his death.

THE Reverend esteeme of his vertues encreated so much, euen in his owne Cloister, that there many times (enioyned by obedience) performing the office of Guardian with great integretie, was at length by the suffrages of all the Fathers, elected twice Prouinciall of the prouince of S. G A B R I E L, where he mad a happy and notable reformation. But after his three yeares expired, he betooke himselfe againe to his poore heremitage, where he fatted his soule with sacred contemplation, perseueringe in readinge the ancient Fathers, watchinges, fastinges, and regulare discipline. But the more he hid himselfe in these obscure places, the more the fame of his learninge and sanctitie did shine abroade. And in testimonie that God almighty would not haue this resplendant light, to be put vnder a bushell, but to be

of blessed Alcantara.

be set vpon a candlestick, to giue light to others, to followe his glorious footsteppes, and to the end, that he might not only enrich his owne soule with the treasures of vertue, but also instruct others, both by his doctrine and example, to aspire to heauen, the sea Apostolique did vouchsafe to honoure him with a commission, by vertue of which, he should erect, and foude a newe prouince vnder the title of S. I O S E P H. Which before his death, he was so happy to see, not only multiplied in number of conuentes, and religious men (by his great labour and traualle) but also to be perfectly established in regulare obseruance, and true monasticall discipline.

At last, the number of his meritts beinge compleat, his iust master, whom he had serued so longe with great fidelitie, was pleased to call him, to reward his labours with an eternall crowne of glorie, and to reap in ioy what he had sowen in teares. He fell sick in the Conuent of S. A N D R E V V E D E M O N T E A R E N O, where God almighty vouchsafed to let him knowe the hower of his death. And before his departure he called his bretheren, exhortinge

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tinge them to perseuerance in that happy course, which they had vndertaken for the loue of God, and the sauinge of their owne soules. He the receiued vpon his knees with abundance of teares the sacred *Viaticum* with singulare devotion, and a little after, his infirmities increasinge, he receiued also the Sacrament of extreame Vnction. The blessed Virgin and S. I o H N (to whome all his life time he was verie much devout) appeared to him, and gaue him assurance of his saluation. Which euer-comfortable newes, he no sooner vnderstood, but his heart was rauished with ioy, and his mouth filled with gladnes, and out of that abundance of content breaketh out into these wordes of the Prophet

(2) *Psal. 112. D A V I D*: (a) *Letatus sum in his que dicta sunt mihi: in domum Domini ibimus: I haue reioyced in those things that are saied vnto me: we will goe into the house of our Lord. In fine the happy hower beinge come, he yealded his blessed soule into the handes of his maker, and by the passage of a temporall death, traualled to an eternall life the 18. of October, vpon the feast of S. L V K S 1562. the 63. yeare of his age, and the 47. of his entrance into holy Religion.*

His

of blessed Alcantara.

His body after his death became more (b) *com pue-
beautifull*, shininge with great claricie, *rulus & biops
inutilis peni-
and lendinge fourth sweete odours. The* *tus arque con-
people from all partes flocked to be-
hold this sacred spectacle, and greedie *litas sepulcri
after to rich a prey, clipped peeces of his
ab eius hera
vroxore qua-
habite, which they conserued as holy *dam Martini
relicues. His bodie was no sooner in the de Friars ac
graue, but his sepulchre began to be re-
prefati oppidi
nourished with many (b) miracles which Artenarum
for breuity sake I omitt to speake of be- accele, addes-
cause I would not be too tedious to the *itus effet eius
meritis Deo
opt. max. id
operi sute inter-
gre sositati restituitur. Et Leonora Gonsalua eiadem oppidi
inquilina a paralysi qua grauissime Laborabat adeius quoque sepul-
crum liberatur. Franc. Gonzaga 3. parte Chron. ordinis Serapicis;
Vide plura apud Ioannem de sancta Maria in vita B. Alcant. c. 30.****

(c) His soule was no sooner out of (c) *In eius
body, but presently he appeared to vita cap. 27.
S. T E R E S I A, to bringe vnto her (d) Operano-
the ioyfull tidings of his receiuinge in- strano habent
to heauen. Many times after he appea- bonitatem me-
red to her, and once amongst the rest ritoria gloria.
he saied vnto her: O H A P P Y P E- ex sua natu-
N A N C E T H A T (d) D E- ra, nec a nobis
S E R V E D S V C H A G L O- sed a Deo.
R I O V S R E C O M P E N C E ! vworkes are
to be take-
nin, a too-*

e 3 (e) Hap- field respect.
1. As they are in ther proper nature & dignity. 2. As they
have Gods promise & acceptance. If vve consider them
in the first fence, so they doe not merite, saluation: if in
the secōd, they doe. This I say, to ansyvere the obiection

The life

of ignorant (e) Happie indeede was his penance, that protestantes, vvhho chaunged sorrowes into pleasures: mour- might take ninge into mirth: teares into ioyes, and occasion a momentarie crosse into an eternall to carpe at crowne. The same blessed T H E R E- (deserved) S I A (as we haue said before) affirmed, and vvhho that she receiued more comfort, and likvwise consolation from him after his death, thinke that then in time of his life. And that his gnisie our soule flewe immediatly to heauen, vwykkes without any passage by purgatorie. All that therby these thinges beinge well examined, vve thinke to merite and verified, by persons, without all heauen, ab- exceptio, worthy of creditt, his holines, stractinge for the glorie of God, honour of the from the Saint, and benefit of the faithfull, merites of our blessed vouchsafed to prounouice him beatified: Sauiours to the end, that as he had a perfect passion fruition of glorie, in the Church trium- vvhenn it is phant, so he should want no praise or certaine, our reuerence, in the Church militant. He that the was cheifest reason of merite is founded in Gods promise, not mans vvorke, and our vwykkes, so to merite, and to be ennobled, cheifly by vertue of ther principall agent our blessed Sauiours passion. *Conradus Klingius de locis com. l.1. c.35. Stapelton. controuers. l.10. c.12. Bellarm. l.1. de iustificat. c.21. &c. l.5-c.11 cum comuni Doctorum.* (e) If the conuersion of sinners, and of greuious sinners, be so pleasinge to almighty God, that the Angels of heauen doe reioyce at it accordinge to S. Bernard *Super has beatorum mansiones attingit penitentie odor (ita ut teste ipsa veritate) magnum gaudium fit inter Angelos Dei super vno peccatore penitentiam agente;*

of blessed Alcantara.

was beatified the 18. of April 1622, and *gaudens penitentes, pugilatrices confortantini: vobis dico quae super conseruos de seculo, & à vijs vestris prauis recedentes, ex-* his office is celebrated in the Conuentes *laximes confortantini: vobis dico quae super conseruos de seculo, & à vijs vestris prauis recedentes, ex-* of his order the 19. of October.

F I N I S.

*cepit mox amaritudo animi penitentis. Ac velut recentium adbac vulnerum dolor nimius excruciat ac perturbat. Secura manus vestra distillat myrrha amaritudinem in salubrem banc vnitatem, quia cor contritum, & humiliatum Deus non despiciet. D. Bernard. Super Cantica serm. 10. I say if such a conuer- sion be so pleasinge to God, hovve glorious may vve judge this holy Fathers penance to be, vvhho from his cradle to his graue, liued innocently and austerly? so that vve may justly say of him as the Church of S. Iohn, *Antra deserti teneris sub annis, cimium turmas fugiens posuit, ac leui saltum maculare vitam, famine posset.**

B E N E D I C T V S D E V S.

B E A -

BEATIFICATIO B. P. DE ALCANTARA.

Gregorius Papa XV. ad perpetuam rei
memoriam.

SN Sede Principis Apostolorum nullis licet nostris suffragantibus meritis a Domino constituti, pijs fidelium nostris, quibus virtutum Dominus in seruis suis honos rificatur, libenter annuimus, eaque favoribus prosequimur opportunitatis. Cum itaque instantibus non solum clarae memorie Philippo III. & charissimo in Christo filio nostro Philippo IV. Hispaniarum Regibus Catholicis, sed etiam ferè omnibus Hispanie regnis, venerabiles fratres nostri S.R.E. Cardinales sacris ritibus prepositi, de mandato nostro causam serui Dei Petri de Alcantara, Ordinis Min. Strictioris obseruantie Discalceatorum nuncupatorum, a Provincia S. Iosephi eiusdem Ordinis Fudatorum, iuxta seriem trium causarum Palatij Apostolici Auditorum ad effectum canonizationis examinauerint, ac multis desuper habitis sessionibus, referente dilecto filio nostro Marco Antonio, tituli S. Eusebii Presbyteri Cardinale Gozzadino nuncupato, plenissime constare de validitate processuum, fama sanctoritatis, fide, punitate, ceterisque virtutibus non in genere solum, sed etiam in specie, retinuarum ac sepulchri veneratione, plurimisque tandem miraculis pronunciauerint, censuerintque posse nos quandounque voluerimus, eundem Dei seruum, iuxta Catholicæ Ecclesie ritum, Sanctum, atque in causa regiantem declarare, omnibusque fidelibus solemnis canonizatione proponere venerandum. Predictus vero Philippus IV. Rex, & dilecti filii Minister Generalis, & Fratres Ordinis predicti nobis humiliter supplicari fecerint,

fecerint, ut donec ad canonizationem dicti Petri deueniatur, idem Petrus Beatus nuncupari ac de eo tanquam de Confessore non Pontifice Missam ac officium ut infra celebrari & recitari respectiue possint, indulgere de benignitate Apostolica dignaremur. Nos supplicationibus huiusmodi inclinati de eorundem Cardinalium consilio, ut idem Dei seruus Petrus de Alcantara in posterius Beatus nuncupari atque de eo tanquam de Confessore non Pontifice die 19. Octob. qua ipsius obitus memoria celebrabitur ubique terrarum ab uniuersa religione Minorum obseruantium virtusque sexus respectiue Missam celebrari atque officium recitari possint. In oppido vero de Alcantara illius duocesis ubi natus atque in altero de Arenas Abulensis duocesis ubi corpus eiusdem requiescere accepimus, omnibus tam regularibus quam secularibus Clericis sub ritu tamen semiduplici idem omnino licet. Ademum in Provincia predicta S. Iosephi, cuius autor extitit, ab ipsis dicti Ordinis Discalceatorum fratribus, etiam cum officiis veluti de Patrono, officium pariter ac Missa iuxta Breuiarij ac Missalis Romani Rubricas celebrari possint, Apostolica auctoritate tenore presentiam perpetuo concedimus & indulgemus. Non obstantibus constitutionibus & ordinationibus Apostolicis, certisque contrariis quibuscumque. Volumus autem ut presentibus transsumptis etiam impressis manu alicuius Notarii Publici subscriptis, & siglo persone indignitate Ecclesiastica constituta muniri eadē prorsus fides adhibeatur que presentibus adhibetur si forent exhibiti vel ostense. Datum Rome apud S. Petrum sub annulo Piscatoris die 18. Aprilis 1622. Pontificatus anno secundo.

Copia vera desumpta ex tomo 4. Bullarij
Laertij Cherubini impresso Romæ
an. 1631.

FA

F A C V L T A S
S V P E R I O R I S.

Librum verè piūm Meditationum
B. PETRI DE ALCANTARA,
Ordinis Fratr. Min. in linguam Anglicanam à religioso Patre Fr. *Ægidio Villoughby*, eiusdem Ordinis Prouinciae nostræ Angl. filio, fideliter translatum, per omnia concordantem exemplari Latino inuenèrunt R R. P P. Theologi, quibus à nobis commissa fuit eiusdem examinatio, ideoque prælo dignum censui, ad instructionem populi Christiani, qui in tot controvèrsijs fidei, his pijs malorum nostrorum exercitijs penè destituitur. Habet insuper adiunctam vitam ipsius B. PETRI è varijs authoribus à prædicto Patre *Ægidio* collectam, de qua idem sit iudicium. Dat. in nostra residenzia Londini 1. Aprilis 1632.

Fr. IOANNES GENINGES,
Minister Prouincialis.

APPROBATIO.

Meditationes hæc B. PETRI DE ALCANTARA, in linguam Anglicanam à Religioso Patre Fr. *Ægidio Villoughby*, Ordinis Minorū S. FRANCISCI translatæ, vti & vita dicti B. Patris ab eodem auctore ex probatis auctoribus collecta, lucem videre merentur. Actum hac 10. Aprilis 1632.

HENRICVS CALENVS,
S. Theol. Licent. Archipr.
Brux. Librorum Censor.

ERRATA.

Pag.	Line.	Faults.	Corrected.
5.	3	teaceth	teacheth.
12.	2	iispirations	inspirations.
13.	17	hart	art.
30.	7	tumpett	trumpett.
30.	24	at'houſand	a thousand.
31.	6	theatninges	threatninges
32.	30	incorunme	incorunmisi.
43.	17	vvorthly	worthy.
49.	11	cribare	cribraret.
50.	20	meditatiq	meditatiq.
81.	9	ony	my.
81.	11	crucifieth	crucifie.
85.	10	transgression	transgressions.
131.	21	the	then.
134.	20	medition	meditation.
135.	15	discouse	discourse.
137.	19	turret	turret.
141.	6	often felt	often is felt.
150.	25	ractes	actes.



A GOLDEN TREATISE, O F MENTAL PRAIER.

Composed by the Reuerend & holy Father
FR. PETER DE ALCANTARA,
of the Seraphicall Order of
S. Francis.

CHAP. I.

IN this Chapter wee will briefly sett downe the fruite of prayer and meditation, that men considering the benefit of them, may be incited with a prompte and more willing mind to fréquent these holy exercises.

It is most certaine, that the malice of our owne heartes, is the principall cause that hindreth vs from attaining to our beatitude

A and

2 Bl. Alcantara,

and euerlasting happines, because it maketh vs slovve to godly actions, dull to vertuous exercisces, and suggesteth a greater difficultie in them then there is, which if it were not, a man might vvalke vwithout any molesta-
tion in the way of vertue, and at length wit-
hout labour attaine to his desired end. Hence it is, that the Apostle sayth : *I delight in the lawe of God according to the inward man: but I see another lawe in my members repugnant to the lawe of my mind, and captiuatinge mee in the lawe of sinne.*

ROM. 7.

The efficacie of deuotion.

This therfore is the prime roote and cause of all our miseries, against which there is no remedie more conuenient, and efficacious, then deuotion, which according to S. THOMAS, is nothing else, but a certayne promptitude and facilitye of the minde to doe well. It doth exclude from our minde this tedious difficultie, and maketh vs with alacritye applie our selfes to vertuous actes. Therfore not without cause wee may tearme it spiritual food, re-creative and heauenly deawe, a pleasant instinct and supernatural affection of the holy Ghost, which doth so roborate and transforme the hartes of men, that it doth begett in them a new gust and fealing of spiritual thinges, and on the contrary a tedious loathing of worldly vanities.

Day.

of Meditation.

3

Daylye experience manifesteth this particuler vnto vs. For wee see the soules of those who arise from profound and deuout prayer, to bee strengthened with admirable resolutions, adorned with newe graces, and replenished with firme purposes of amendment of life, and frequenting pious exercisces, they burne with an ardent desire of seruing and louing him with their wholl heart, whom in their prayer they found the God of all goodnes and benignitye, desiring to suffer any grieuous and burdensome crosse whatsoeuer it bee, yea to sheadd their bloud for his sake. To conclude, prayer is a bath, an open place, a bedde of pleasure, wherein the soule recreateth and refresheth her selfe.

If you aske mee, what bee the chiefe *means* to attaine vnto this heroicall vertue of deuotion. I answere with the same *deuotion* is gotten. Doctor, that it is gotten by serious meditation and contemplation of heauenlye things. For the ruminating of these in the soule, with a more attentiu and profound consideration, doth begett in the will that disposition which wee call deuotio, which effectually rouzeth and pricketh a man forward to every good worke. For this cause the exercise of prayer and meditation was frequent and familiar to men of

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San.

4 *BL. ALEXANDER.*

sanctity, as iudging it the easiest meane to
cōpasse deuotio, which although it be but
one only simple vertue, yet it disposeth
and maketh vs fitt for all others, and as it
were with spurres pricketh vs forward to
the performance of euery good work.

*Bonaventure in
the Med. of the life
of Christ cap. 73.*
I call S. BONAVENTURE to witnesse what
I say: his wordes are these. The inestima-
ble vertue of prayer is able to obtaine all
good, and remoue all hurtfull things. If
thou will patiently endure aduersity; bee a
man of prayer: If thou wilt ouercome tri-
bulatio and temptatio, bee a man of prayer:
If thou wilt trāple vpō thy peruerse inclina-
tio, bee a man of prayer: If thou wilt knowe
the deceiptes of Sathan, and auoid the; bee
a man of prayer. If thou wilt liue ioyfully in
the worke of God, and trace the way of
labour and affliction; bee a man of prayer. If
thou wilt exercise thy selfe in a spiritual
course, and not walke according to the de-
sires of the flesh; bee a man of prayer. If thou
wilt put to flight thy vaine and trif-
ling fancies; bee a man of prayer. If thou
wilt farr thy soule with holy thoughtes,
good desires, seruour, and deuotion; bee a
man of prayer. If thou wilt establish thy
heart with a manly Spirit, and constat pur-
pose in the seruice of God; bee a man of
prayer. To conclude, if thou wilt roote
out

of Meditation.

out vice, and bee indued with vertues; bee
a man of prayer. In it is receaued the Vn-
ction of the holy Ghost, which teaceth all
thinges. Also if thou wilt clime vp to the
toppe of contemplation, and enjoye the
sweet embracings of thy beloued spouse;
be a man of prayer. For by the exercise
of prayer, wee come to that contemplation
and taste of heauenly thinges. Thou seest,
of what great power and vertue, prayer is.
For the Confirmation of all which, omit-
ting the Testimonie of holy Scriptures, let
this bee an euident proofe vnto the, that
by dayly experience, wee heare and see ill-
literate and simple persons, to haue attained
the foresyd and greater thinges by the
vertue of prayer. Thus S. BONAVENTURE.

I beceech you, can there bee found a
richer treasure or a more fertile fieldē de-
sired? Heare an other Doctor no lesse
for Religion and sanctite, who vpon the
same matter sayth: By prayer the soule is
cleansed from sinne, replenished with cha-
rity, confirmed in fayth, roborated in
and refreshed in Spirit. Prayer establis-
heth the inward man, pacifieth the heart,
knoweth the trueth, conquereth tempta-
tions, expelleth sorrowe, reneweth the
fences, stirreth vp languishing vertue, put-
teth to flight tepidiry, and skoureth the

rust of vices. In prayer the quicke sparkles of celestial desires are incessantly sent forth from the burning coales of diuine loue. The priuiledges of prayer are rare, the prerogatiues admirable. Prayer vnlocketh the gates of Heauen, manifesteth diuine secrets and alwaies findeth free accessse to the ea- res of God. I will adde no more, for those thinges which haue alreadie bene sayd, abundantly expresse the fruites of this holy exercise.

CHAP. II.

Of the matter of prayer.

HA VING takē notice of the viti- lity of prayer and meditation, wee will nowe declare the matter about which meditation is to bee conuer- sant: for seeing it is ordained to this end, that the soule of him that meditateth, may bee excited to the feare and loue of God, and the keeping of his commaundemen- tes: the matter of meditation ought to bee such, as doth next dispose to this end and scope. And although euery creature, and the whole Scripture it selfe bee able to mi- nister

of Meditation.

nister this matter vnto vs, yet speaking ge- nerally, the mysteries of our holy fayth, contained in the *Creed*, are most efficacious and profitable to attaine vnto this end. For these on the one side, cōtaine God Almigh- ties benefittes, the later iudgement, the paines of hell, and the glorie of Paradise; all which, like sharpe prickes dōe spurre vs on to the loue and feare of God: On the other side, they comprehend the life and Passion of our Lord and Sauiour, which is the springe and fountaine of all our good. These two thinges contained in the Apo- stolicall *Creed*, for the most part yeilde matter of meditatiō, and therfore I thinke prayer and meditation ought chiefly to be conuersant about thē, although euery one in particular may haue certaine pointes, which may more specially inflame and ex- cite the soule to the loue and feare of God.

Beeing therfore perswaded with this reason, that I might the better conduct younge beginners, and vntrained soldiars into this way of mentall prayer, and that I might giue vnto them altogether prepa- red, and (as it were to little children) fore- chowed matter of meditation, I haue selec- ted two kindes of meditatiōs, almost takē out of the mysteries of our faith, the one seruing for the morning, the other for the

euening: that as the body is comonly fedd with two meales ; soe the soule may be strenghened and nourished with two spiritual refectiōns, by the meditation and consideration of heauenly things. Some of these are of the Paſſion and Resurrec-
tion of our Lord Iēvs CHRIST, others of the misteries of our fayth, as I sayd be-
fore; But those who can not haue the oppor-
tunity, to meditate twice a day, after this manner, they may vſe them, to wit; they
may take to their consideration the 7. for-
mer Meditations in the one weeke , and
the latter in an other weeke ; or they may
chiefly iſſist vpon thoſe of the life and
Paſſion of our Sauiour: although the other
be not to be neglected, especially in the be-
gining of a soules conuerſion , to whom
they are proper, when the feare of God,
contrition and horrour of ſinne , is chiefly
to be regarded and ſought after.



Here

Here followe the 7. former Me-
ditations.

A Meditation for Munday.

THIS day thou ſhalt call to memory thy ſinnes, and ſhalt exercise thy ſelfe in the knowledge of thy ſelfe, that on the one ſide , thou maieſt truly ponder the greatneſſe of thy offences, and on the other ſide, thou maieſt looke into thy baſenes, and thy owne nothing, and acknowledge that all the good which thou haſt, is from God. This conſideration will gett thee ſubmiſſion of mind, and true humility the mother of all vertues.

First therfore waigh with thy ſelfe, the multitude of the ſinnes of thy former life, and namely thoſe ſinnes which thou haſt committed whē as yet thou wert not illuminated with the diuine ſplendour to know God Almighty rightlie. These if thou doſt examine with exquife diligēce , thou wilt finde to bee ſo many in number, that they will exceede the haires of thy head: for in this time thou leadest the life of a heathen, ignorant of the diuine powre, and as it were without any knowledge of his ſacred Deity.

Then

Then consider how thou hast behaued thy selfe about the tēnne commaundemēts and the 7. deadly sinnes, and thou wilt finde, that there is no precept of Almichtie God, which thou hast not violated, nor any mortal sinne, into which thou hast not fallen, eyther in thought, word, or deed. After that, call to minde God Almichties benefites, which he hath bestowed vpon thee in the whole course of thy former life, and see whether thou canst giue a good accompte of them or no.

Tell mee I pray the, how thou hast consumed the dayes of thy infancy, thy youth and the flower of thy manly age? how hast thou employed thy 5. exteriour senses, and inward faculties of thy soule, giuen vnto thee by God, only to bee busied about his holy seruice, and the contemplation of heauenly things, what hast thou turned thine eyes vnto, but to beholde vanityes? what haue thine eares listned after but lies and tales? what hath thy tongue vttered but ministringes, and blasphemous speaches? what hath thy tast and feeling bene delighted in, but wanton pleasures? how hast thou vsed the remedy of the holy Sacramentes, giuen vnto thee, as a singular gifte? what thanksgiving hast thou restored for soe many benefites which he hath hea-

heaped vpon thee? what alacrity hast thou vsed to satisfie his holy iuspirations? how hast thou spent thy health of body and naturall forces? how hast thou dispensed thy goodes of fortune? what good vse hast thou made of the commodity, and profferred occasions to liue well? what care hast thou had of thy neighbours welfare? what workes of mercye, or of bountye, hast thou done vnto them? what wilt thou answe in that terrible daye of iudgement, when thou must render a seuere accompte of all these thinges! o withered tree destinated to eternal flames, except thou doest penance! what excuse wilt thou then frame, when thou must giue an accompte of euery yeare, of euery month, of euery weeke, of euery daye, of euery moment?

Thirdly consider, those sinnes, which thou hast euery day committed, after God Almighty hath illuminated and opened the eyes of thy soule to meditate vpon heauenly thinges: and thou shalt finde that the old *Adam* hath yet borne a great sway in thy actions, and that sinfull roote to haue procreated in the, many and peruerse habits.

Diligently ponder, how vngratefull thou hast bene to God Almighty, how vng-
mind-

mindfull of his benefites , how contrary thou hast behaued thy selfe against his holly inspirations, how slouthfull and remisse in his diuine seruice : in which thou scarce hast euer vsed due alacrity and diligence, or such purity of intention as it is requisite, nay hast thou not serued God for worldly respects and commodity ?

Enter into consideration how rigid thou art to thy neighbour, and how indulgent to thy selfe ? how thou louest thy owne will, how thou adhearest to thy sensuality, how chary of thy honour , and of euery thing that belongeth vnto thee. Waigh well with thy selfe, how euery day thou growest more arrogant , more ambitious , more vaine, more prone to anger, more desperatly bent to malice, more prone to delights and pleasures, more mutable , more vncostant , more propense to carnal sinnes, and a greater louer of earthly vanities. Consider thy inconstancy in good, thy indiscretion in wordes, imprudence in deedes, in heigh and difficult matters putillaninity sometimes, and often audacious temerity.

In the fourth place, after thou hast take notice of the number and order of thy sinnes, pause vpon them a while in thy minde, and waigh euery one in the ballance of due

due consideration, that thou maiest perceave with what misery thou art on every si-de enuironed. Which that thou maiest the better doe ; consider these three circum- stances in the sinnes of thy former life. First against whom thou hast sinned. 2. Why thou hast sinned. 3. How thou hast sinned. Which if thou doest diligently pene- trate, thou wilt finde that thou hast offend God, whose maiestie and goodnes is immense, who hath obliged man vnto him with so many benefites, as there are sandes in the sea, or drops of water in the Ocean.

Why hast thou sinned, or what violent occasiō hath enforced thee to any cryme ? a litle momentary pride : a foule repre- sentation of pleasure; some smale commoditye placed in thy sight, and oftentimes, no oc- cation at all , but euil custome , and mere contempt of God.

But alas how hast thou sinned ? with such facility , with such notable audacity, with so little feare and conscience, yea with such security and pleasure, as though thou hadest to doe with no other then a woo- den God , who regardeth not these sublu- nary thinges , neyther vnderstandeth or seeth any thing, what is done vpon the fa- ce of the earth. Is this the honour due vnto his supreme maiestie? is this a remunera- tion

tion of his benefites ? doest thou with such seruices require his whippings , his buffettinges , and pretious bloud sheadd vpon the Crosse for thy sake ? o wicked wretch that hast offended so great a maiesty , more miserable , that for so sleight a cause , and most deplorable , that thou art not sensible of thy vtter Ruine ; that after sinne thou fearest not damnation , and so neglectest to doe penance .

Moreouer it is very profitable to insist a while vpon this consideration , and that thou esteeme thy selfe nothing , and certenly perswade thy selfe that thou hast nothing of thy selfe but sinne ; all other thinges to be the gistes of God Almightyes bounie . For it is most euident , that all our good , both of grace and nature doth flowe from him : for he is the Author of the grace of predestination (which is the fountaine and originall of all others) of the grace of our vocation , of concomitant and perseuering grace , and of the grace of euerlasting life . What hast thou then , that thou canst boast of , but sinne ? only this nothing thou canst attribute to thy selfe , all other things belong to God : Whence thou maist clearly and manifestly perceave what he is , and what thou art , and hence conieture , what diffidence thou oughtest to haue

haue in thy selfe , and what confidence in God ; to loue him , and to gloriſe thy ſelfe in him , and not in thy ſelfe , but ſo farr as his grace doth freely operate in thee .

These thinges being digested with attētive meditation , as much as thou canſt , vrge thy ſelfe , to a contempt of thy ſelfe : imagine that thou art like an emptie reede shaken with euery blaſt of wind , without grauity , without vertue , without conſtan‐cy , without ſtablytie , and finally without any thing . Thinke thy ſelfe to bee a Lazarus foure dayes dead , a ſtincking and abhomina‐ble caraffe , ſwarming with vermin , ſo filthy that paſſers by are forced to ſtoppe their noſtrels , leaſt they ſmeiſ ſuch a naſtye ſauour . Beleeue me , thou hart more abho‐minable , before God and his holy Sain‐tes . Thinke thy ſelfe vnworthy to lifte vp thine eyes to Heauen ; to tread vpon the earth , or that the creatures ſhould ſerue thee ; yea not worthy to eat bread or breath in the aire . Caſt thy ſelfe with the ſinfull woman in the Ghospel , at our Bleſſed Sa‐uiours feete : preſenting thy ſelfe vnto him with a confuſed and bluſhing countenāce , no otherwise the woman take in adul‐tery before her husband , and with inward ſorrows , and true compunction , begg par‐don of thy ſinnes : that for his infinite mer‐

mercy and goodnes , he would vouchsafe to receiue thee againe into his fauour, and that thou maist dwell in his howse for euer.

A Meditation for Tynesdaye.

THIS day thou shalt meditate vpon the miseries of the life of man , out of which consideration, thou wilt take notice of worldly vanities, and learne how much the glorie of them ought to be despised, seeing they are built vp so weake a foun- dation , as our fading life, whose miseries, because they be innumerable , thou shalt take but seauen of the principall for thy Meditation.

First therfore consider the shortnes of the life of man, being restrained within the limittes of threescore and ten or fourscore yeares, whatsoeuer the ouerplus be, it is but labour and sorrow , as the Prophet speake- keth : Out of this time, if thou doest sub- tract thy infancy, which time thou liuedst rather the life of a beast, then a man ; the time that thou spendest in sleepe, for then thou art depriued of the vse of reason, which only distinguishest man from other creatures , and thou wilt finde thy life to bee farre shorter then euer thou didst ima- gine.

of Meditation.

gine. This time if thou doest compare with the eternity of the world to come , thou wilt find it to be lesse , then a momenit. Coniecture then the foolish madnes of the louers of this worlde, who that they might enioye one only momentary pleasure of this transitory life, doe not feare to expose them selfes to the losse of eternity.

Then take to thy consideration the vn- certainty of this life (which is a second mi- serie) for not only it is most short, but the breuitie it selfe is most vncertaine and doubtful. For who is therē, that attaineth to the age of three or fourē score? how ma- ny are extinguished at their very entrance into the worlde ? how many perish in the flowere of their youth ? You knowe not sayth CHRIST, whē your Lord is to come: whether in the first watch or 2. or 3. or in the cocke crowing. Which that thou ma- iest the better vnderstand , call to minde especially thy domesticke friends, and other men placed in dignity and authority, whom inexorable death hath at diuersē ages (some yonger, some older) suddenly taken out of this worlde , irritating their vaine and longe-life- promiseing hopes.

Ponder 4. the inconstancy and mutabi- lity of this present life, neuer continuing in one state. The dispositiō of the body often

changeth, not alwaies enjoying health, but subiect to frequent diseases: but if thou reflect vpon the minde, thou shalt see that like the troubled Ocean it is tossed vp and downe with the boisterous windes of her vntamed passions, inordinate appetites, fluctuante cogitations, which vpō every occasion doe disturbe her quiet. Consider lastly, the instability of the goods of fortune (as they tearme them) to how many chaunces they are obnoxious, neuer suffering the temporall substance to stand still in one stay, therby to make men happy and prosperous; but like a wheele is turned vp side-downe, without any intermission. Consider also the continuall motiō of our life, neuer restinge night nor day, but goeth forward without ceasinge, and every day more and more wasteth it selfe, so that it may not vnsightly be compared to a candle; which by little and little consumeth it selfe, and when it giueth the clearest light, the sooner it approacheth vnto its end, also to a flower, which springeth vp in the morninge, at noone fadeth, and at night wholy withereth away. Which God Almighty speakinge by the Prophet ISAIE, of this mutation, excellently shaddoweth in these wordes: *Omnis caro fenum, & omnis gloria eius quasi flos agri.* All flesh is hay, and all

the

the glorie of it is like a flower of the feild.

Which words S. HIEROME expoundinge saith, if one cloth rightly consider the fraylty of the flesh, and that we growe and decrease accordinge to the moments of howres, neuer remaininge in one state, and that the very thinge we now speake, doe, or write, passeth a way as part of our life, he will not doubt to confesse that all flesh is hay, and the glorie therof as a flower, or the greene medowes. He that is now an infant will by and by be a little childe, then presently a younge man, growinge towarde his decreped age, through vncertayne seasons, and before he hath contented him selfe in youth, fealeth old age to come vpon him. The beutifull woman which did drawe after her wholl troops of gallats in her youth, her face is now fourrowed with deformed wrincles, and she that before was a pleasure, is now vgly to behold.

Consider §. how deceiptfull this life is, Hieron. I. (which is the worst condition of all deludinge the louers of the world with a miserable blindnes) for we thinke it amiable, when in it selfe it is vgly: we thinke it sweet, when it is full of gall and bitternes: when it is circumscribed with in the shor-

B 2 test

test

11 Com.

in Isa.

cap. 43.

test limits, we thinke it longe. When it is full of misery, we thinke it so happie, that there is no danger, no hazard that me will not expose themselues vnto, for the conservation of it, yea with the losse of eternall glorie, when they doe not feare to committ those sinnes which make them vneworthie of so great felicitie.

Consider sixtly, that besides the breuitie, and other fore-mentioned conditiōs, that small time wherin we liue, is subiect to innumerable miseries both spirituall and corporall. That it may well be called a torrent of teares, and oceane of infinite molestations. S. HIEROME reporteth how XERXES that potent kinge, who ouer turned mountaines, and made bridges ouer the seas, when from a high place, he beheld that infinite multitude of men, and his innumerable army, he wept, to thinke that not one of those men there present, should be aliue after a hūdred yeares. And presently addinge, ô that we could but ascend vnto such a turrett, to behold the wholl earth vnder our feete, then would I manifest vnto thee, the ruins of the world, nation risinge against nation, and kingedome against kingdome, some tormenteed, others slaine, some drowned, others led into captiuitie. Here marryinge, heer mour-

mourninge, some borne, others dyinge, some aboundinge in wealth, others beggin-ge. And not only the mighty army of XERXES but all the men of the world, in a short space to be turned to dust and ashes.

Take notice a little, of the labours and infirmities of the body, the cogitations and passions of the minde: the diuerse dangers in euery, state and all seasons threateninge the ruine of man: and thou wilt every day, more clearly vnderstand the miseries of this life, that when thou seest, what is to be hoped for in this world, thou maiest with a noble courrage contemne it.

The last of all these miseries, is death, both in respect of soule or bodie, a thinge most terrible: for in this moment the body is disrobed of all the thinges, in this world. And the soule in this point receiueth the ioyfull or fearefull sentece of eternity.

These thinges well considered, thou wilt be instructed how short and misera-ble the glorie of this world is, and how it ought to be hated and despised of thee.



changeth, not alwaies enjoying health, but subiect to frequent diseases: but if thou reflect vpon the minde, thou shalt see that like the troubled Ocean it is tossed vp and downe with the boisterous windes of her vntamed passions, inordinate appetites, fluctuatinge cogitations, which vpō every occasion doe disturbe her quiet. Consider lastly, the instability of the goods of fortune (as they tearme them) to how many chaunces they are obnoxious, neuer suffering the temporall substance to stand still in one stay, therby to make men happy and prosperous; but like a wheele is turned vp side-downe, without any intermission. Consider also the continuall motiō of our life, neuer restinge night nor day, but goeth forward without ceasinge, and euery day more and more wasteth it selfe, so that it may not vnsightly be compared to a candle, which by little and little consumeth it selfe, and when it giueth the clearest light, the sooner it approcheth vnto its end, also to a flower, which springeth vp in the morninge, at noone fadeth, and at night wholly withereth away. Which God Almighty speakinge by the Prophet ISAIE, of this mutation, excellently shaddoweth in these wordes: *Omnis caro fenum, & omnis gloria eius quasi flos agri.* All flesh is hay, and all

the

the glorie of it is like a flower of the feild.

Which words S. HIEROME expoundinge faith, if one doth rightly consider the fraylty of the flesh, and that we growe and decrease accordinge to the moments of howres, neuer remaininge in one state, and that the very thinge we now speake, doe, or write, passeth a way as part of our life, he will not doubt to confesse that all flesh is hay, and the glorie therof as a flower, or the greene medowes. He that is now an infant will by and by be a little childe, then presently a younge man, growinge towarde his decreped age, through vncertaine seasons, and before he hath contented him selfe in youth, fealeth old age to come vpon him. The beutifull woman which did drawe after her wholl troops of gallats in her youth, her face is now fourrowed with deformed wrincles, and she that before was a pleasure, is now vgly to behold.

Consider 5. how deceiptfull this life is, Hieron. 1. (which is the worst condition of all deludinge the louers of the world with a miserable blindnes) for we thinke it amiable, when in it selfe it is vgly: we thinke it sweet, when it is full of gall and bitternes: when it is circumscribed with in the shor-

in Isa.
cap. 49.

test limits, we thinke it longe. When it is full of misery, we thinke it so happie, that there is no danger, no hazard that me will not expose themselfes vnto, for the conservation of it, yea with the losse of eternall glorie, when they doe not feare to committ those sinnes which make them vneworthie of so great felicitie.

Consider sixthly, that besides the breuitie, and other fore-mentioned conditiōs, that small time wherin we liue, is subiect to innumerable miseries both spirituall and corporall. That it may well be called a torrent of teares, and oceane of infinite molestations. S. HIEROME reporteth how XERXES that potent kinge, who ouer turned mountaines, and made bridges ouer the seas, when from a high place, he beheld that infinite multitude of men, and his innumerable army, he wept, to thinke that not one of those men there present, should be aliue after a hūdred yeares. And presently addinge, ô that we could but ascend vnto such a turrett, to behold the wholl earth vnder our feete, then would I manifest vnto thee, the ruins of the world, nation risinge against nation, and kingedome against kingdome, some tormented, others slaine, some drowned, others led into captiuitie. Here marryinge, heer mour-

mourninge, some borne, others dyinge, some aboundinge in wealth, others beggin-ge. And not only the mighty army of XERXES but all the men of the world, in a short space to be turned to dust and ashes.

Take notice a little, of the labours and infirmities of the body, the cogitations and passions of the minde: the diuerse dangers in euery, state and all seasons threateninge the ruine of man: and thou wilt euery day, more clearly vnderstand the miseries of this life, that when thou seest, what is to be hoped for in this world, thou maiest with a noble courage contemne it.

The last of all these miseries, is death, both in respect of soule or bodie, a thinge most terrible: for in this moment the body is disrobed of all the thinges, in this world. And the soule in this point receiueth the ioyfull or fearefull sentence of eternity.

These thinges well considered, thou wilt be instructed how short and misera-ble the glorie of this world is, and how it ought to be hated and despised of thee.



A Meditation for VVednesday.

THIS day thou shalt meditate on death: the consideration of vvhich is very profitable to attaine vnto true vvisedome, to beate dovvne sinne; and to excite men timely to cast vp their accompts vvhich they are to make in the latter day.

Consider first the vncertainty of that hovver vvhether death is to seaze vpon thee, thou knowest not the day, nor the place, nor the state vvhether in it shall finde thee: only thou beleueest that thou must die, for other things thou art vvholly ignorant of; except that it oftentimes setteth vpon a man vvhether he little dreameth of it, and thinketh it to be furthest of.

Consider secondly, that greiuious separatiō, vvhich shall be at the point of death, not only from every thinge of this present life, vvhether thou tookest content, but also betwixt the soule and body, vvhose society vvas most anciēt, most louinge and deare. If a man taketh it greiuiously to be banished, to be thrust out of his natvie Soile, and to be deprived of that aire vvhether he first breathed, although he should carry all others, his dearest thinges vvhith him, hovv **far** more bitterly vwould he take that ge-

nerall

of Meditation.

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nerall exile, vvhether he must be vveaned from all vworldly thinges, his hovvse, his meanes, his father, his mother, his childrē, his freinds, vncertaine vwhether he him selfe must goe. Then shall he be deprived of the light and the commerce of all humane creatures?

If the oxe vvhether he is disioyned from his fellowve vvhith vvhether he vvas vizont in the same yoake to be coupled, vvhith bellowinge doth exprefis his sorrowve, vhat sobbs, vhat sights vvhilt thou fetch, vvhether thou shalt perceiue thy selfe to be violently pulled from these thy confedēratis.

Consider also that anxiety vvhether vvhith the minde of the dyinge is tormented, vvhether abstracted from al corporall busines, he only thinketh vhat shall become of his body, and vhat shall betyde his soule, hovv his body must be cast seauen foot into the earth, to be eaten of vvormes; and vhat vwill become of his soule, vvhether it is to remaine, he is altogether vncertaine: vvhich cogitation doth surely much trouble the minde of him that dieth, vvhether he certainly knowveth there is heauen or hell to be expected, and he at equall distance frō them both, neither can he tell vvhich of tāese tvwo contraries vwill fall to his share.

B 4

An

Another no lesse affliction followeth, that presently he must give a strict accōpt of all his forpassed life, to the eternal iudgement, which men of great sanctity were wont to feare, when ARSENIVS in the last point of life, was seen of his disciples to weep, and tréble, they asked him why he feared death he answered. *Reuera filiali, metus hic cessit ex quo factus sum Monachus.* Indeed my chldré the feare wherwith ye see me nowe afflicted, hath never quite left me from the time I was first made a Monke.

Then all the sinnes of a mans former life come rushinge into his memory, representinge themselves vnto him, as it were in battaile aray, to destroy him, but especially his greiuious sinnes wherin he tooke greatest delight, are continually present to his fancie, which doe so torment him that they driue him into a dangerous despaire of his saluation: and the remembrance of those pleasures, which before were gratefull, are now most bitter vnto him. That the wise man saith true: *Ne intuaris vinum quando flauescit cum splenduerit in vitro color eius ingreditur blande, & in nouissimo mordebit vt coluber, & sicut regulus venena diffundet: Behold not wine when it waxeth yelowe, when the colour therof*

Simox
Metaph. in
vita eius
to. 4. apud
surium.

Proverb.
23.

therof shall shine in the glasse: it goeth in pleasantly, but in the end, it will bite like a snake and as a basiliske it spreads abrode his poisons.

Such a poisoned cup the enemy of mankinde presenteth to the louers of the world to drinke. Such is the liquour of the outward gilded cup of Babilon.

Wicked man seinge himselfe enuironed with so many accusers, beginneth then to feare the success of his latter iudgement, and to bewaile himselfe vwith bitter outcries, o miserable and vnhappie man that haue liued thus longe in darknes, and vwalked in the footstepps of iniquitie, vwhat shall novve become of me? if S. PAVLE saith such as a man soveth, such Gal. 6. he shall reap. I that haue sovved nothinge else but the vworkes of the flesh, vwhat should I expect but corruption?

If S. JOHN saith, that no vncleane thinge shall enter into that heauenly cittie, vwhich is paued vwith burnished gold, vwhat part shall I haue therin, that am defiled vwith all kinde of luxurie.

Then followe the Sacraments of the Church, Confessiō, Communion, extream Vnctiō, vwhich are the last helps of our holy Mother the Catholique Church, to succour his dyinge soule.

From

From all these foresaid circumstances, thou maiest gather with what anxiety, a wicked man is oppressed at the hower of his departure. Then he will wish that he had led a better life, and what great austerie he would vse, if longer time might be permitted to him. Then would he vehemently implore the diuine assistance, but the greatnes of his infirmity, and the panges of death approachinge will not suffer him, which will be so great that he shall scarce be able to tourne his thoughtes vpon God.

Behold after these, the Symtomes of this last infirmitie forrūners of death, and harbangers of thy last end, which certainly in themselues are horrible, and to the beholders terrible. The stomacke swelleth, the speech faileth, the feet beginne to die, the knees wax cold, the nostrells fall, the eies sinck, the face waxeth pale, the tongue can no longer performe its office, finally the striuinge of the soule goinge out of the body, disturbeth all the senses, and leaueth them wholly without vigour.

But who is able to expresse the anguish of the soule, which is farr greater for then it is in a mighty agonie, both in regarde of the doubtfull euent of her saluation: and of the strict account she is presently to make

make of the deeds of her wholl life: as also because she naturally loueth the body, she can not be separated from it but with great affliction, especially knowinge not what shall become of her.

Hauinge well contemplated the soule departinge the bodie, thou must yet make two iournies more: one in accompaninge the body to the graue, the other in followinge the soule to the decidinge of her cause. And thou shalt see the euent of both. Marke therfore, the dead carcas how they prepare a windinge sheete for it. What expedition they vse to carry it out of the house. Consider the solemnity and rites wher with it is carried to the graue. Howe the bells ringe, and euery one inquire of the dead. The office of the church also, the prayers of the standers by, the dolefull tune of the church, while the body is carried to the graue and buried. The teares of freinds and kindred, and all those ceremonies which are wont to be performed about the dead.

Leauinge the bodie vnder the earth, accompany the soule passinge to a newe and vnknowne region, where she expecteth the sentence of the eternall iudge. Imagine with thy selfe that thou art present at this tribunall, and the wholl court of

of heauen, waitinge with deepe silence, and great attention the euent and sentence of this iudgement, here must be giuen a stricte accompt of all receiuinges and disbur- mentes. I say accompt, of thy life, of thy goods, of thy familie, of the diuine inspira- tions, of the meanes and occasions to liue well, and finally of the blood of IESVS CHRIST, and the vse of his Sacraments, and accordinge as his accompt is, so the sen- tence shall be pronounced.

A Meditation for Thursday.

THIS day thou shalt meditate vpō the latter iudgement, to the end that thou maiest stirr vp in thy soule, two principall effects, which euery Christiā soule ought to haue, to witt, the feare of God and ha- tred of sinne.

Place therfore first before thine eies, ho- we terrible that day will be, wherin all the litigious causes of the sonnes of *Adam* shal- be decided, and a finall end put to the pro- cesses of our wholl life, and what shall be ordained of those for all eternitie, shalbe publickly pronounced to the veiwe of the wholl world.

This day comprehendeth in it, all the dayes of all ages, past, present; and to come. And exacteth a feuere accompt of all the actions

actions of all men, powringe out all the fu- ry vpon men, heaped vp together from fo- repassed ages; because then the torrent of God Almighties vengeance, shall ouer- flowe beyonde its limits, rushinge with a greater violence, by howe much more it was the longer detained, and at once shall ouerwhelme all Iniquity from the crea- tion of the world.

Consider secondly the dreadfull signes which shall goe before this day. For our Sauiour faith: *Erunt signa in sole & luna & stellis.* And all creatures of heauen and earth shall tremble, vnderstādinge their ruine to be at hande. Men also, as our Sauiour faith, worne and withered a way perceiuinge the horrible raginge of the sea: and they themselues scarce a heares breadth distant from death. Seinge also the mighty risin- ges, and inundations of the water; and by these coniecturinge the calamities and mi- sterie, these prodigious signes threatē to the world: wilbe amazed with such a horrour, that they will be without life, without voyce, without colour, or human shape: they will be dead before they die, drea- dinge their damnation before the sentence be pronounced, immagininge the futu- re paine, by their present distemper. Then euerie one out of exceedinge feare,

feare, will be so solicitous of himselfe, that he will nothinge regard others whosoeuer they be, parents, or husbands, or wifs, or freinds or companions.

Imagine thirdly, the vniuersall deluge of fire, which shall goe before this iudgement: that dreadfull noise of the trumpett, which one of the Archangels shall blowe; wherwith all the people of the wholl world shalbe sommoned together, in one place makinge their appearance before the iudgment seat: and last of all that dreadfull Maiestie; the supreame iudge of the quick and dead, shall assume to him selfe vpon this tribunall.

Fourthly consider what exact accompt shall be required of euery one; Holy Iog faith: *Vere scio quod ita est quod non iustificetur homo compositus Deo. Si voluerit contendere cum eo, non poterit respondere vnum pro mille.* Indeed I knowe it is so, and that man cannot be iustified compared with God if he will contend with him he cannot answere him one for at housand. What then shall become of man when God shall beginne to handle him accordinge to rigour of his iustice? when he shall speake to his conscience inwardly?

O wicked and peruerse man, what hast thou seene in me, that out of the height of

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impiety, despisinge me, thou shouldest loyne with my enemies? I haue created thee accordinge to mine owne Image and likenes; I haue illuminated thee with the light of faith: I haue seasoned thee in the Christian faith from thy infancy: I haue redeemed thee with my owne blood; for thy sake I haue fasted, watched, prayed, vndergone tedious iournies, sweat blood, and endured manie more miseries in the course of my life; for the loue of thee, I haue suffered persecutions, injuries, blasphemies, and the verie Croffe it selfe. This Croffe is my witnes, these nailes are my witnesses, these woundes are my witnesses, which thou seest imprinted in my handes and feete; to conclude heauen and earth that did behold my passion are my witnes. Howe I haue drawne thy soule. How I haue redeemed thee with the ransome of my pretious blood.

Howe hast thou esteemed this pretious margarite, bought by me with an inestimable price. O generation of vipers, why hast thou chosen to serue my enemy with a great deale of paine, and neglected thy duetie towards me thy creatour and redeemer which thou mightst haue performed with a great deale of pleasure. I haue called thee and thou wouldest not answere to

to my vocatio: I haue knocked at the dore of thy heart; and thou hast refused me entrance. I haue stretched my armes vpon the Crosse, and thou hast not regarded me, thou despisedst my councells, promises and theatninges. Pronounce therfore ô yee Angels, the sentence and be iudges betwixt me and my vine. Numquid amplius aliquid facere potui vineæ meæ quod non feci? What could I doe any thinge more to my vine that I haue not done?

What will the reprobate and scoffers at diuine misteries answere? they that haue hished at vertue, derided simplicitie, and obserued better the lawes of the world then of God? they that haue stopped their eares at the voyce of God? they who haue contemned his diuine inspirations? they who haue bene rebellious against his commandements, and ingreatfull for his benefitts? What will those libertins say, who lettinge themselues loose to all vices, haue liued as if there were no God at all, or that he did not regarde the thinges that are done belowe? What will those say, who haue followed their comodities, gust and pleasure for a lawe. *Quid facietis in die visitationis & calamitatis de longe venientis? ad cuius confugietis auxilium? & ubi derelinquetis gloriam vestram ut non incuruimine sub vinculo & cum inter-*

interfectis cadatis. VVhat will yee doe in the day of visitation and of calamity cominge from farr? to whose help will ye flee, and where will yea leaue your glory, that ye be not bowed vnder the bond, and fall with the slaine.

Fiftly consider, that terrible sentence, which after judgement, the supreme iudge pronounceth against the wicked, which he will thunder out with such a dreadfull noyse, that at the sound therof the eares of the standers by will ringe, as the Prophet ESAY saith: *Labia eius repleta sunt indignatione, & lingua eius quasi ignis devorans.* His lipps are filled with indignation, and his tongue as a deuouringe fire. For what flames can be so ardent as those wordes: *Discedite à me maledicti in ignem eternum, qui paratus est Diabolo & Angelis eius.* Goe from me o yea cursed into euerlastinge fire, prepared for the Diuill and his Angels. Every word of which sentence is full of bitter torment. For who is able to comprehend what this separation is, what curse, what fire, what society, and finally what eternity to which the wicked are adiudged by force of this sentence?

A Meditation for Fryday.

D. Bonaventura.
in Faf.
Cap. 3.

THIS day thou shalt meditate vpō the torments of hell, that duely ponde- ringe them, thou maiest haue a more awe of God Almighty, and a greater hatred of sinne. S. BONAVENTURE teacheth that these torments are to be considered accordinge to certaine similitudes sett downe by holy men, concerninge this matter. Wherfore it will not be beside our purpose (as the same Doctour in the same place saith) to imagine hell, a horrible confus- sed CHAOS, a lake vnder the earth, a deepe fyery dungeon, or as a spacious citty, darke and terrible, burninge with obscure and fearfull fire; filled with waylinges, how- linges, weepinge for the inexplicable paines.

In this miserable and vnhappy place are two kindes of torments, *pæna sensus*, & *pæna damni*, the punishment of fence, and the punishment of losse of God Almighty.

Consider that there is no outward, or inward fence of the damned, which is not afflicted with a proper torment; for as the damned in all their members and fences haue offended God, vinge them as instrumets and weapons wherby, negle-
ctinge

of Meditation.

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tinge the Society and lawe of God, they serued sinne. So the divine iustice hath ordained, that euery fence accordinge to their desert, should be tormented with a proper punishment, the wanton and lasciuious eies, shalbe tortured, with the hidious aspect of diuils. The eares which were open to lies, detrac- tions, and other impurities, shall ringe with vnwonted clamours, out-cries and blasphemies. The noles which were delighted with sweet odours, shalbe poysned with an intollerable stinck. The taſt which was glutted with dainty fare, shalbe tormented with intollerable hunger and thirst. The tongue which uttered detrac- tions and murmurings, shall drinke the gall of dragons. The wanton which gaue consent to their brutish de- sires shalbe frozen with extreame cold and as holy IOB saith: *Ab aqua nimium trans. Job 24. ibit ad colorem nimium*: From the waters of snowe they shall passe to the extremity of heat.

The interiour fences also shall not want their torments, the imagination shalbe tormented with the apprehension of present paines, the memory with the callinge to minde of fore-paſſed pleafures, the understandinge with the ſcare of

C 2 futu-

future greifs , the will with an incredibile
hatred and raginge towards God.

*Is illa
Euangl.
ubi erit
fletus &
stridor
dantis.*

There as S. GREGORIE saith shalbe, intollerable cold vnquenchable fire, a neuer
dyinge worme , a stinch which none is
able to endure, horred darknes, greuious
whippinges, vizards of diuils, confusion of
sinners , and desperation of al good. Tell
me I pray thee couldest thou endure on
little moment the least part of al these tor-
mentes? surely it would be very greuious,
if not intollerable for thee. What the will
it be to suffer this wholl inundation of
cuils, at one time in all thy members and
fences, externall, and internall, not one or
a thousand nights , but for all eternitie?
VVhat fence, what tongue, what minde of
man is able to conceiue or expresse these
things?

Neither are these the greatest torment
the damned suffer. There remaineth yet a
more greuious, which the diuines doe call
the punishment of losse, which consisteth
in the perpetuall priuation of the beatifi-
call vision of God and his Saintes , and of
all that glorious and blessed Societie. For
that is the greatest torment, that deprieth
man of the most excellent good. Seeinge
therfore that God is that effectuall and
cheefest good of all goods, to be deprived
of

of him, must needs be the greatest of
all cuils.

These are the generall tormentes of the
damned; besides these, there are other par-
ticular tormentes, wherwith every one ac-
cordinge to their sinnes are afflicted. The
proud, the enuious, the couetous, the luxu-
rious, and other vicious haue their peculiar
tormentes; the measure of paine there, shal-
be proportionable to their pleasure here,
confusion there proportionable to their
glory and presumption here: pouertie and
want, to plenty, hunger and thirst, to glut-
tonie and to former delights.

To all these aforesaid tormentes, eterni-
tie is yet to be added , which is as it were
the scale and key of all the rest ; for if at
leugh, they should haue an end, they were
some way tollerable. That which is restrai-
ned to a certaine time can not be so vnsuf-
ferable, but this punishment is euerlastin-
ge, without solace , without relaxation,
without diminution ; where remaineth no
hope of an end of their tormentes , or tor-
mentours, or themselues that suffer them,
but is, as it were a perpetuall and irrevoca-
ble banisht, neuer to be recalled, which
is a thinge of importance to be noted. That
the minde may be stirred vp therby, to that
faulinge feare and loue of God.

From this eternitie of torments proceedeth that great hatred wherwith they are incensed against God. Hence proceed those horrible blasphemies and curses which with their impure mouthes they raile at God, sayinge. Cursed be God which hath created vs, and hath condemned vs to an euerlasting death, which doth so oppresse and torments vs that notwithstandinge neuer killeth. Cursed be his power, which doth so greviously afflict vs. Cursed be his wisedome that hath laied open all our wickednes. Cursed be his iustice that hath exacted eternall punishment for temporall sins. Cursed be his Croffe which hath not benefited vs. Cursed be his blood that was shed , seeinge it requireth reuenge against vs. Cursed be the Mother of God, who although she be pious and propitious to all , yet notwithstandinge hath shewed herselfe to vs cruell and vnmercifull. Cursed be all the Saintes of God raigninge with CHRIST, and reioyceinge at our miseries.

These are the hymnes, this is that harsh melody, which the damned doe continually iarr, railinge at the almighty with detested blasphemies for all eternitie.

A Me-

A Meditation for Saterday.

THIS day thou shalt meditate vpon the glory of the Saintes of God, which may more eagerly inflame thy soule, to contemne the vanities of this world, and aspire to that eternall felicitie.

To the end thou mayest get a better knowledge and gust of this inestimable glory. Consider these fие thinges. First the excellency of the place. Secondly the ioy of that society. Thirdly the vision of God. Forthly the glory of their bodies. Fifthly the compleat perfection of all abundant good.

In the excellency of the place , take notice of the admirable and wonderfull spaciousnes of it ; in approued authours thou readest , that the least of the fixed starrings of heauen , is bigger then the wholl earth, and some of them doe exceede the earth two or three hundred times in bigenes. Then cast vp thine cies to heauen and consider the innumerable multitude of them in the firmament, and thou shalt see a great deale of void space, where many more may be placed, howe cast thou then but be astonished at the greatness of so rare a fabricke ?

C 4

Then

Then consider the beutie of that place, which no tongue is able to expresse, for if God Almighty in this place of banishment and vale of miserie, hath made many thinges of admirable and comely hue: of what great beuty, and how much ordened dost thou thinke that place to be: which God would haue to be the ordinarie seat of his glory: the Pallace of his Majestie: the mansion of the elect, and the Paradise of all pleasure?

After the beuty of the place, consider the Nobilitie of the Inhabitants, whose number, sanctity, riches, and glory, are farr beyound our imaginatio. S. IOHN saith the multitude are so great that they are innumerable. S. DIONYSIUS affirmeth that the multitude of Angels doe farr exceed the nuber of sublunary creatures. Whom S. THOMAS following thinketh, that as the heauens by many degrets exceed the bignes of the earth, beinge but as it were a point of them: so proportionably the glorious Spirits, therin conteined, doe surpassee all earthly thinges. VVhat can be thought more admirable? assuredly this well pondered would make a man loose himselfe in the abyffe of God Almighties goodnes.

Yea without comparison every one of these blessed Spirits is far more beutifull to the

the eie then all this visible world. O what would it be to contemplate the incomprehensible number of so rare and glorious Spirits? and to vnderstand their seuerall offices and perfections? how the Angels bringe messages? how the Archangels Minister? how the Principalities triumph? how the Powers reioyce? how the Dominations bare sway? how the Vertues shine? how the Thrones doe glitter? how the Cherubins doe illuminate? how the Seraphins doe burne with loue? and finally how all with one ynanimous consent doe prayse Almighty God.

If the conuersation and fellowship of good men be so delightfull, what pleasure will it be, to be assotiated to so great a multitude of Saintes? to be conuersant with the Apostles? to talke with the Prophets? to discourse with Martyrs? and to enjoy the blessed familiarity of all the elect? O but what will it be to enjoy his presence whome the morninge starrs doe magnifie? whose beutie the sun and moone admire? before whome the holy Angels and all the celestiall Spirits doe prostrate themselues. That *sumum bonum*, that infinite good, which in it selfe comprehendeth all good whatsoeuer, ô what content will the heart of man feale to behold him,

him, who is one and all. Who although he be most simple without composition, yet containeth in himselfe the perfections of all thinges created. VVhat can the heart of man desire greater?

If it were so much to see and heare Kinge SALOMON, that the Queene of SABA cominge from farr remote parts, moued with his great wisedome, should say:
 3. Reg. 10. *Beati viri tui & beati serui tui, hi qui stant coram te semper & audiunt sapientiam tuam:* Happy are thy men and happy are thy seruants, those who stande before thee alwayes and heare thy wisedome. VVhat would it be to behold that true SALOMON? that eternall wisedome? that immense maiestie? that inestimable beutie? that infinite goodnes? and which is more to enjoy him for all eternitie?

This is the essentiall and truest glory of the Saints: this is the last end and centre of all our wishes. Consider more ouer the glory of their bodies, which shalbe beautified with these fowre gifte, subtiltie, agilitie, impaßibilitie and claritie. VVhich will be so great, that euery one of the elect (as our bleſſed Sauiour faith) shall glitter like the sun in the kingdome of his faſher.

If

If one only sun doth so reioyce and illuminate this vniuerſe. VVhat doest thou thinke, so many brighter funnes will doe which shall there shine?

VVhat should I speake of other ioyes which there shalbe: health without infirmitie: libertie without violence: beutie without deformity: immortalitie without corruption: abundance without want: rest without trouble: securitie without feare: riches without pouerty: ioy without sorrowe: honour without contradiction. There as S. AVGVSTI-
 NE faith, shalbe true glory when euery one ^{De Anga} l. 22. de
 shalbe comended without errour or flat-
 tery. True honour shal be denied to none ^{cap. 30.}
^{civit. Des} that is wortly of it, and it shalbe giuen to
 none vnworthy, neither shall any vn-
 worthy attempt it, there, where none
 shalbe permitted but the worthy. There
 shalbe true peace, where they shall suffer
 no contradiction frō themſelues or others:
 the reward of vertue shalbe he which gaue
 vertue. And he hath promised to giue him-
 ſelue. Then which, better or greater no-
 thinge can be. For what other thinge is it
 that he ſpake by the Prophet: *Ero illorum*
Dew, & ipsi erunt mihi plebs: I will be their
 God, and they shalbe my people. If I doe
 not who is it that can fatiate their ſoules?
 I wil.

I wilbe that good which can possibly be desired of man. Their life, their peace, their honour. For so is that vnderstood which *2. Cor. 18.* the Apostle speaketh : *Vt sit Deus in omnibus.* That God be in all. He shalbe the end of all our desires, which shalbe contemplated without end, shalbe loued without tediousnes, shalbe prayded without ceasing.

The place of the saints, if thou doest behold the spaciousnes of it, it shalbe most ample, if the beutie, most delicious, if the splendour, most exceeding bright. There shalbe admirable delightfull society, no vissitude of times, the day shall not succeed the night, nor the night the day, but all time shalbe there a like. There shalbe one perpetuall springe, which the holy Ghost, with a wonderfull temper shall always make greene and florishing, there shall all celebrate euerlastinge holy-dayes, rejoycing with vnspeakable gladnes, there shall all sound their instruments of musick and singe prayses to him, by whose power they liue and raigne for all eternity.

O celestiall city, secure habitation, pal lace flowinge with all delights, people without murmuring, quiet Citizans, men without pouertie. O that I may at length enjoy thee. O that the dayes of my banishment

ment were ended. VVhen will that ioyfull day come? VVhen shall I goe out of this mortallity? VVhen shall I come and appere before thy face & God.

A Meditation for Sunday.

THIS day thou shalt spend, in recogit-
ting God Almighty his benefitts, that thou mayest bee gratefull to him for the same, and thy heart inflamed with the loue of him, that hath heaped so manie fauours vpon thee. VVhich seeing they bee innumerable, thou shalt take fower of the cheifest to thy consideration, which are the benefitts of thy Creation, Preservation, Redemption, and Vocation, besides particular benefitts specially bestowed vpon thee.

Touching the benefitt of thy creation, examine diligently what thou werst before, what God hath giuen thee when thou hadest no precedent meritts. Behold thy comely bodie well composed of its members and senses: Looke vpon thy noble soule, beautified with these excellent facul-
ties, the vnderstanding, will, and memo-
rie.

Remember that when he gaue thee thy soule, he gaue thee all thinges, seeing there is
no

no perfection in any creature, which is not found more excellent in the soule of man. Hence it manifestly followeth, that when God bestowed this great benefitt vpon thee, he with it bestowed what els souuer thou hast.

Concerninge the benefitt of thy conseruation and preseruation, consider that all thy being dependeth vpon the diuine prouidence and disposure, without which thou canst not moue a foote, or subsist the least moment of time. More-ouer for thy vse he hath created the wholl vniuersall world, and all thinges therin conteined; the earth, the sea, birds, fishes, beasts, plants, nay the verie Angels themselues he hath ordained to doe thee seruice. Consider thy health, the strength of limes, and thy verie life it selfe, which thou enjoyest, to be the great benefitts of God Almichtie, who, by dayly nourishment and other temporall helps, cōserueth all these in their proper vi- gour. Obserue the miseries and tribulatiōs vnto which other mortall men are subiect; into which, as others thou hadst easily fallē, had not the diuine goodnes protected thee

In the benefitt of thy Redemptiō: consider the abundant good both in quanttie and qualitie, which he hath purchased to thee by it.

Then

Then call to minde the bitternes of his torments, which he suffered in soule and bodie to ease thee; and that the acknowledgmēt of these fauours may take a greater impression in thee, in the mysterie of his passion take notice of these fower thin- ḡes. First, who it is that suffereth, secondly what he suffered, thirdly for whome he suffered, fourthly why he suffered.

He that suffered, was God, what he suf- fered, weare the most greuious torments, and such that neuer any mortall man did endure the like.

For whome? for most ingratefull crea- tures, cursed and worthy of hell fyre.

VVhy? not for any comoditie or profit of his owne, or that we had merited so much by our precedent meritts. But only moued to it by his infinite loue and bounty tovwards vs.

Cōcerninge the benefit of thy vocation, cōsider the grace he gaue thee, vvhē he infu- sed into thee, the Christian faith, by the re- ceiuing of Baptisme and other Sacraments: when he did enrolle thee in the booke of his eternitie, amongst faithfull soules. If after thy first vocatiō, vwhen by sinne thou hadest lost the innocencie of baptisme, he hath dravvne thee againe out of the mire of thy ovnē corruptiō, restored thee to grace and

and brought thee back againe into the way of thy owne salutation: What thankes giunge oughtest thou to render vnto him, for so great a benefit? How great was his mercie to thee, that with longanimite he expected so manie yeares? that he permitted thee to spend thy dayes in so great impurite of wickednes? that he hath often visited thee with good and holy inspirations? that he did not cutt of the thred of thy peruerse life, as he serued others in the same place? To conclude, that he called thee with such efficacious grace, that he restored thee from death to life, and opened thine eies to contemplate his cleare light? How great was his clemécie towards thee, that he supported thee with his grace, not to returne back againe to thy former sinnes. But to ouercome the enimies of mankind, and constantly to perseuere in a vertuous course.

These are the comon benefits. Besides these, there are manie secret ons known to none but those that receive them, and others, which indeed are not cleerly known vnto themselves, but only to him that bestowed them. How often for thy prid, arrogancie, ingratitude and flouth hast thou deserved to be left of God as many for lesser causes haue beeone? Yet not

with-

withstandinge he would not? How often hath God with his singulare prouidence, exempted thee from euill, remoued occasions of offending, brokē the snare that the enimie had laied for thy perdition; hath frustrated his expectation, and would not permit that his councells and machinations should preuaile against thee? how often hath he done to vs as he did to S. PETER in the Gospell: *Ecce Satanas expetiuit vs, vs tribaret sicut triticum. Ego autem rogaui pro te, ut non deficiat fides tua:* Behold Sattan hath required to haue you for to sift as vvheat but I haue praied for thee that thy faith faile not. And vwho can knowv these secret benefits but God alone? benefits, vwhich be palpable are easie to be seene, but those vwhich be priuate consistinge in the vvorkeing of good or preuentinge of ill the mind of man can not perfectly comprehend. Wherfore it is meet and conuenient to reason, that vve should render immortal thankes to God, for all these benefits and cōfesse ingenuously, that vve haue received more, then vve are able to restore, and that our obligations tovwards him, are so great, that vwith any goods of ours vve shall neuer liue to requite them, vwhen vve cannot so much as number or comprehend them in our vnderstandinge.

C H A P. III.

*Of the time, and fruite of these
Meditations.*

BE H O V L D (Christian Reader) thou hast seauen former meditations, accomodated to every day of the weeke, not so, that it is an offence to meditate vpon an other matter ; when as whe saied before , whatsoeuer inflameth the heart, to the loue and feare of God, and to the keepinge of his comandements , may profitably bee assumed for matter of meditation. VVe therfore out of so great a number haue selected these, both, for that they conteine the cheifest misteries of our faith , and that in them is force and efficacie , to rouse vp our souls to the loue and feare of God: as also to set before nouices, which haue need of a guide, prepared and as it were fore-chewed matter, least they confusedly wander vp and downe in this spacious feild, without any certaintie, now meditating vpon one thinge and presently vpon an other.

More-ouer these meditatiōs, as wee haue saied

of Meditation.

saied elswhere, sute best with those which *The for-*
*doe beginne to turne to God Almighty *mer me-**
*from their wicked courses. For these had *ditations**
*need, to be helped by the consideration of *me they**
*these thinges, to the detestation and hor- *to vvb-**
*rour of sinne, the feare of God, the con- *properly**
tempt of the world, which are as it were
the first steps to the amendment of our
former peruerse life, therfore it is good
that they should sometime insist in them,
that they may haue the better foundation
for other ensuing vertues.



OF SEAVEN OTHER
MEDITATIONS
 O F
 T H E P A S S I O N
 O F
 O V R L O R D ,

And the manner hovv it ought to
 be meditated vpon.

C H A P. IV.

HE followe seauen other
 Meditations of the Passion
 of CHRIST, his Resurrection
 and Ascension into heauen,
 to which others of his holy
 life may well be added.

six thinges cheifly to be
 But we must note, that in the Passion of
 our blessed Sauiour, six thinges cheifly are
 to be meditated vpon. First, the bitternes

of Meditation.

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of his sorrowe, that we may compassionate in the passion of Christ. considered
 with him. Secondly, the greatnes of our
 sinnes, which were the cause of his tor-
 ments, that we may abhorr them. Third-
 ly, the greatnes of the benefit, that we may
 be grateful for it. Fourthly, the excel-
 lencie of the diuine charite and bountie
 therin manifested, that we may loue him
 more feruently. Fifthly, the conueniencie
 of the misterie, that we may be drawne to
 admiration of it. Lastly, the multiplicite
 of vertues of our blessed Sauiour which
 did shine in this stupendious misterie, that
 we may partly immitate and partly admire
 them; wherfore in the middest of these
 meditations let vs some time compas-
 sionate with our blessed Sauiour in the extre-
 mitie of his sorrowes, extreme indeed,
 both by reason of the tendernes of his
 bodie, as also for the great affection he
 bore vnto our soules. He did suffer them
 without any manner of consolation, as
 we shall speake herafter in its proper
 place. Sometimes let vs stirr vp in our
 selues compunction for our sinnes, which
 were the cause of these his so great suf-
 feringes. Sometimes let vs kindle in
 our souls an ardent affection, consi-
 dering his great affection towards vs,
 which vpon the Crosse he declared and
 mani-

manifested to the whole world. And the benefit which he bestowed vpon vs in his passion, because he bought vs with the inestimable price of his precious bloud , of which only we reape the fruite and commoditie. Sometimes let vs ruminate vpon the conueniencie of the manner , his eternall wisdome would he pleased to chuse, to cure our miseries, to satisfie for our sins, to releue our necessities, to make vs partakers of his glorie , to reppresse our prid , to induce vs to the loue and ioyfull sufferinge of pouertie, iniurie, austertie , and all commendable laborious exercices. More-ouer it will not be besids the matter , to looke into the admirable examples which did principally shine in the life and passion of our sweet Sauiour, his meeknes , patience, cbedience, mercie, pouertie, charitie , humilitie , bountie , modestie , and other his rare vertues , which in all his actions did glitter like starrs in the firmament. And cheifly to this end, let vs meditate vpō thele thinges , that as neere as we can, we may imitate them. Let vs shake off slouth , and eleuate our souls , that as much as in our power lyeth with the help of his holy gracie we may trace his sacred foot-steps. This is the best and most profitable methode of meditatinge vpon our Blessed Sauours

pas.

passion, that is to say , that ther-by we be drawne to imitation, and so to be wholly transformed into our Blessed Sauiour, that each one may say with the Apostle: *Vnde autem iam non ego, vniuit vero in me Christus:* And nowe I liue but not I , but CHRIST in me. More-ouer in meditating our Blessed Sauiours passion , we must set him before the eies of our souls, imageringe that we see, as present the panges of his heauy sufferinges; and we must not only insist vpon the bare historie of his passion, but we must consider other circumstances , namely these fower , first , who it is that suffereth, secondly , for whome , thirdly , howe , fourthly , why. First, he that suffereth is God, omnipotent, infinite, immense. For whome ? the most vngratefull creature in the world, and less regardinge his benefits. Howe ? with most profound humilitie, charitie, bountie, meeknes, mercie, patience, modestie, &c. VVhy? not for his owne commoditie, nor our merits ; but for his immense pietie, mercie, goodnes and loue towards vs.

Last of all, let vs not onely contemplate his outward, but his inward torments, for much more may be considered in the soule then in the bodie of CHRIST, both for the more sensible feelinge of his passion there,

Bl. Alcantara,
as also for diuers other considerations
therin.

Thus hauing set downe this short preface let vs proceed to the handlinge of the mysteries themselues of our blessed Sauiuours passion.

Seauen other Meditations.

A Meditation for Munday.

THIS day after thou hast seigned thy selfe with the signe of the Crosse, thou shalt meditate vpon the washinge of the disciples feete, and institution of the blessed Sacrament.

Consider, ô my soule, at this supper sweet IESVS himselfe to be present, contemplate that inestimable example of humilitie, which he there proposed vnto thee for imitation; when risinge from the table, where he sat with his disciples, hee would be pleased to wash their feete: O sweete IESVS, what is it that thou doest? O sweete IESVS, why doth thy mightie Maiestie thus diminish it selfe? O my soule, what wouldest thou haue thought to see God tumblinge at the feete of men, and prostrate before IVDAS? O barbarous and cruel man, could not so great humilitie mollifie thy

thy heart? was not so great bountie and sweetnes able to penetrate thy entrals, and to reclaime thee from thy intended mischeife? can it be that thou determinest to sell this meeke lambe for so small a price? nay if it be so, how couldest thou yet endure to behold so rare an example? I wonder it did not wound thy guiltie soule with compunction for thy greuous crime? O delicate hands, howe could you touch so filthie, fordidie, and with sinne contaminated feete? O pure and vnspotted hands, howe could you endure to wash those feete, that were fouled with goinge and cominge to make a sale of your precious bloud? O thrice happye Apostles, did you not tremble and stand amazed at the sight of so great humilitie? What dost thou doe PETER? canst thou permitt the Lord of Maiestie to wash thy feete? S. PETER wholly astonished with the admiration of this spectacle, when he sawe our blessed Sauiuour fallinge downe at his feete, cryed out: *Domine tu mihi lauas pedes?* Lord doest thou wash my feete? what, art not thou the Sonne of the euer-livinge God? art not thou the creatour of the whole world, the beutie of heauen, the Paradise of Angels, redeemer of mankind, splendour

of thy Fathers glorie, most deepe fountaine of the eternall wisdome? and doest thou wash my feet? howe cometh it to passe, that thou Lord of so great maestic and glorie shouldest thus debase thy selfe to so vile a seruice?

Thē cōsider, howe he washed all his disciples feet one by one, and after washinge, wiped them with a linnen cloath wherwith he was girded, open the eies of thy mind to behold in these misteries a representation of our redemption. This linnen cloath so wiped their feet, that all the dirt which was vpon their feet did sticke on the linnen cloath: not without misterie.

For what more foule then mā conceiued in sinne? What more pure thē CHRIST conceiued by the operation of the holy Ghost? *Dilectus meus candidus & rubicundus electus ex milibus:* My beloued saith the spouse in the canticles is white and rudy chosen of thousands. Yet not withstandinge most pure, most beutifull CHRIST tooke vnto himselfe all the spots of our soules: frō which that he might clese vs (as you may see him vpō the Crosse) he would be pleased to defile himselfe with the filth of our impuritie. Consider lastly with what words our Blessed Sauiour closed vp this

Cont. 5.

this humble action: *Exemplum dedi vobis ut quemadmodum ego feci vobis, ita & vos faciatis:* I haue giuen you an example that as I haue done to you, you may doe the like. Which words doe not only pertaine to this present action, and example of humilitie: but likewise to all the actions of CHRIST through-outhis wholl life, vvhich is a most absolute and perfect rule for vs to square our actions by, especially of humilitie, which is here to life represented vnto vs.

Of the institution of the blessed
Sacrament.

HE that desireth to comprehend any thinge of this noble misterie, must certainly thinke, that no toungue is able to express that immense loue, and ardent affection vvhervvith our blessed Sauiour vvas inflamed tovwards his holy Church and all faithfull soules, in institutinge this stupendious misterie. For vwhen this bridgrome determined to depart out of this <sup>The causes
why</sup> immortal life, and to leaue the Church his stituted ^{Christ in-} beloved spouse; least this is departure ^{this Sa-} should be any occasion to her of forget-^{crament.} tinge her redeemer; he gaue her this Sacra- ^{The first.} ment vvhervin he himselfe is present, as a pledge and memoriall of his perpetuall loue.

Then

The second. Then seinge he was to be longe absent; least his spouse should remaine solitarie alone, he, for her consolation, would leaue himselfe for her companion in this holy Sacrament.

The third. When our blessed Sauiour was to suffer death for the redemption of his spouse, to enrich her with his most pretious bloud, and to purge her from sinnes: least she should be defrauded of so great a treasure, he would giue her a key in this Sacrament wherby she might at her pleasure enjoy these riches: for as S. CHRYSOSTOME saith, we must thinke as often as we come to this Sacrament we put our mouth to the bles-
dinge side of CHRIST, and from thence drinke his most precious blood whose mer-
its we participate.

The fourth. More-ouer this celestiall bridgrome, did desire to be tenderly beloved of his spouse, and for this cause would leaue her this mysticall meat, consecrated with most efficacious words, and therin so great vertue, that whosocuer receiuers it worthily shall presently be strooke with the darter of loue.

The fifth. He would likewise bestowe vpon his spouse some sure pledge therby to make her secure of the certaine succession of future glorie, that in hope of so great a good, he

he might temper the laborious difficultie and make the tedious bitternes of this present life, to be more tollerable, wher-
fore that the spouse might certainly be-
leeue, that she shall at length attairie to these vnspeakable goods, he hath
giuen her for a pawne, this inestimable treasure, vvhich is as much
vvorth as that vvhich is expected hereaf-
ter, that she should not doubt but that
God vwill giue her himselfe in glorie
vvhile he liueth in spirit, that vwould
be pleased to giue her himselfe in this
vale of teares, vvhile he liueth in
flesh.

The sixth. He vwould more-ouer vwhen he dyed
make his last vwill and testament, vvhich
in he left to his spouse a singular man-
nat to cure all her infirmities, a gift then
vvhich, nothinge can be more soue-
aigne, nothinge more pretious, see-
ing the deity it selfe is therin contei-
ned.

The seventh. Lastly, he desired to feede our soules
with some heauenly foode, seinge they
need no lesse nourishment that they might
liue spiritually, then the body needeth
corporall sustinence that she might liue
corporally. Wherfore this spirituall phy-
sition whē he had diligently examined and
felt

felt the pulse of our fragilitie , instituted this holy Sacrament which he exhibited vnto vs vnder the species or forme of bread, that he might declare what effect it should worke in vs, that is to say, that it is as necessarie for our soules , as bread for the bodie.

A Meditation for Tursday.

THIS day thou shalt meditate of the prayer CHRIST made in the garden, the methode therof, and the contumelies he suffered in the howse of ANNAS.

Consider therfore, howe CHRIST our Lord , after the consummation of his mysticall body with his disciples, before he entred into the tragedie of his passion, went to make his prayer vpon the mount Oliuet, wherby he would instruct vs, that in all aduersities and tribulations of this present life, we fly to prayer , as to a holy anchor ; the power of which is so great, that it either beateth back the forces of tribulations, or (which is of greater excellencie) ministreth sufficient strength to endure them, with a constant and willinge mind.

He tooke for companions in his iourney
some of his disciples , whome he loued
aboue

aboue the rest , S. PETER, S. JAMES , and S. JOHN. Which as they were sic-wittenes of his transfiguration, so likewise they should be present in his agonie , to behold him for the loue of man now transformed into a farr more different shape ; then he was, when he manifested himselfe vnto them , in a glorious and glitteringe forme.

That also he might open vnto them, his inward greife, to be much greater then appeared outwardly. He saith vnto them : *Tristis est anima mea vsque ad mortem. Suscinate hic & vigilate mecum:* My soule is heauy vnto death. Stay heere and vwatch vwith me. O vwordes full of compassion ! Then departinge from his disciples a stones cast, vwith great submision and reuerence he praied his Father: *Pater si fieri potest transeat a me Calix iste , verumtamen non mea voluntas sed tua fiat :* Father if it be possible let this Chalice passe from me , but not my vwill, but thine be done. Which prayer vwhen he had repeated thrice , he fell into such an agonie , that he syweat drops of blood, trickling dovvne the earth , from his pre-cious body.

Consider that , partly the foreseeinge of the most vnspeakable torments that euer any mortall man suffered, prepared for his most

most tender body : partly the distinct representatiō of the sins of the whole world, for the expiatinge of which he was nowe to suffer death vpon the Crosse : partly the remembrance of the ingratitude of many, which would not esteeme , or reape any profit from this great benefitt, strok such a deepe impression into his soule , that it filled it with sad and incredible anxiety, so troubled his senses and tender flesh, that all the elements of his body beeinge weake ned, the opened pores on every side swett out drops of blood. If the flesh , which properly suffered not this anguish, but on ly through a simple immagination , was thus afflicted, what did his soule feale ; to whome properly these sorrowes did appertaine ?

His prayer beinge ended , that counterfai特 freind of CHRIST *Iudas* the traitour, came attēded with a hellish boand, he I say which renounced his apostleship , to be head and Captaine of a troope of hell hounds , behold in the fore-front of that wicked multitude, impudently cominge to his master whome before he had folde, betraying him with a kisse of peace and freindship.

In that hower saied I E s v s to the company, which came to apprehend him:

You

You have come out as to a theefe to apprehend me with swerdes and staves ? I sat every day with you teachinge in the temple , and you laid no hand on me. But this is your hower and the power of darkenes.

This misterie is worthy of admiration, for what thinge can be more admirable and stupendious , then to see the only begotten Sonne of God , not only in the forme of sinfull man, but in the shape of a condemned man : *Hec est hec vestra, & potestas reuebrarum* : This is your hower and the power of darkenes . From which wordes is gathered that this innocent lambe, was left to the diabolicall cruelty of the princes of darkenes, who by their vice-gerentes and ministers powred all the malice and mischeife they were able to conceiue against him. Consider, how much for thy sake the supreme Maiestie of God is humbled , to endure all the extremite of tormentes that euer any suffered in this present life , not to die for his owne faultes but for thy sins , but he did vndergoe this of his owne accord, to free thee from the power of Sattan.

He had skarce spoken these wordes, when that wholl rabble of hunger-starued wolues, gapinge after their prey , rushed vpon this meeke and innocent lambe , ha-

E linge,

linge, tearinge and afflictinge him with as much cruelty as euer they could. O barbarous and inhumane proceedinges? ô cruell and sauage blowes, contumelious violences, wherwith they tormented him? they insulted after a horred manner no otherwise, the conquerers retourne loaden with spoiles after they haue put to flight their enemies, or hunters when they haue caught their prey. The handes which a little before were exercised in workinge miracles, they were nowe bound with ropes so cruelly, that they rased the skin, and besmeared them with blood. Thus they led him through the publick streetes of *Ierusalem*, followinge him with contumelies and blowes: behould him in this iournie goinge alone, left by all his disciples, compassed with a multitude of his enemies, forced to make such hast, that he was wholly out of breath, his colour changed, his face blushinge, and his wholl body weakened and wearied by reason of the intollerable present difficultie.

Although our blessed Sauiour was barbarously and most cruelly handled by that blood-suckinge multitude: yet neuer the less thou mightst haue seene in his countenance a pleasant sweetnes, in his eies a comely grauitie, in his manners a di-

uine

uine grace, which all the torments of the wholl world could not so much as diminish in the least degree.

After this goe with our blessed Sauiour into the house of A N N A S the high Preist, that there thou maiest take notice what fauour he reaped for his mild answver, when A N N A S examined him of his, and his disciples doctrine: which vvas, that one of the Officers gaue him a cruell blowe vpon his cheeke sayinge: *Sic responde Pontifici?* Doest thou answver the high Preist so? to him C H R I S T replied: *Si male locutus sum, testimonium perhibe de malo: Iean.18. si autem bene, quid me cedis?* If I haue spoken euill bringe testimony of it, but if vvel, vvhyl doest thou beat me?

Behould, ô my soule, not only the mild answver, but the print of the Officers hand in his tender cheeke, his countenance notwithstandinge quiet and amiable, not a vvhitt moued at the shame of so great an effront, because he invvardly thought so louue and humbly of himselfe, that he had tourned the other side vwithout delay, if the rascald had desired it.

A Meditation for Wednesday.

THIS day thou shalt consider, how C H R I S T our Lord was offered vp to C A Y P H A S the high Preist: what torments he endured there all that night: how S. P E T E R denied him: and last of all how cruelly he was scourged.

Consider first of all, how he was led from the house of A N N A S to C A Y P H A S his house, it is worth thy paines to followe him therer. For there thou shalt see the mighty sun of iustice ecclypsed: there thou shalt behould, the diuine face vpon which the Angels themselues delight to gaze, to be deformed with the filthie spittinges of the Iewes. For our blessed Sauour standinge in the middest of them, was contayred by the high Preist in the name of his Father, to speake out, what he was. He answered as beseeming himselfe: but they who were vnworthy of such an answere, blinded with the splendour of this great light, like mad dogges rushed vpon him, vometing vp the bitter gaule of their wholl malice against him.

They began whole troupes of them to smite him, to beate and kick him, they spit vpon

of Meditation.

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vpon his diuine face, and threwe the verie snot of their filthy noses vpon it. Others hood-winked his eies with a dirty linnen cloath, smiteinge him vpō the cheeke, and would in mokerie haue him prophecy who it was that strooke him. O admirabile and vn-heard of patience, and humilitie of the only begotten Sonne of God. O the face which the Angels of heauen doe contemplate with incredible ioy, besmeared with their sordid and filthy spittinges.

Men, when they spit, comonly tourne themselues to some foule place, some what remote from the sight of others. In this pallace was there no place found more contemptible therin to cast their spit and filthy dryuell, then the sacred face of C H R I S T I E S V S? O man that art but dust and ashes, canst thou choose but be stirred vp to humility, and contempt of thy selfe at so rare an example?

Consider more-ouer, what tormentes our blessed Sauour suffered all that night, how the Officers that kept him, that sleepe should not close his eies, afflicted him, derided the supreme Maiestic of God, and loaded him with many iniurious contumelies.

Waighe with thy selfe, my soule, that now thy spouse is made the white and mark, receiuing vpō him selfe all the darteres of iniurious contumelies that the mischeiuous Iewes could shute at him. O cruell night, o vnquiet night, in which thou blessed I E S V S couldest rest no more by reason of anguish and affliction, then others who tooke pleasure to torment the. The night was ordained for the rest of all creatures, that the members and senses weareid with the labour of the day before, might then take some repose. But the wicked Soldiers that kept thee, spent it in tormentinge of thy senses, they did bind thy bodie, vexed thy soule, fettered thy hands and feete with manicles, buffeted thy cheeke, spit vpon thy face, blinded thine eies, so that all thy senses when they shoule haue beene refreshed were afflicted.

O ! howe farre did these mattins differ from those, which at the same time the blessed Angels did singe in heauen ? they cried holy, holy: and the Iewes cried he is guiltie of death, crucifie, crucifie him. O angelicall spirits which vnderstood both cries, what could you imagine or thinke whē you sawe the inhumane crueltie wherwith he was handled in earth, whome in heauen you adored with so great

great submission and reuerence ? did you not wonder to see him suffer all these extreame tormentes for to expiate the sins of those, who inflicted them vpon him ? who hath euer heard of such immense charitie, that for this reason one should suffer death, to heale the greife and cure the woundes of his murtherers ?

The fall of S. P E T E R, that great pillar, did not a little increase the anxietie of this tedious night; that he, whome he entierly loued amongst the rest whome he chose to be present at his glorious transfiguration, to whome he committed the primacie of his holy Church, whome he ordained to be head and Prince of the Apostles, that he I say, shoule before his face, and in his presence denie him, not once but thrice, addinge blasphemies and oathes, that he knewe not the man. Tell me P E T E R, did this man seeme to thee so vn-godly and wicked, that in future times thou didest feare, it would bee a disgrace vnto thee to confes him now ? didest thou not cōsider that thou didst first pronounce the sentence of condemnation against him, before he was adiudged by the high Preists, when thou didest not esteeme him so much as worthy of thy acknowledgment ? couldest thou doe a greater

ter iniury to C H R I S T I E S V S ?

But C H R I S T sorrowfull for this great fault of S. P E T E R turned himselfe, and cast his eies vpon him , that with his gratiouse countenance he might reduce this wandering sheepe into the sheepfold of his mercies. O admirable aspect, secret indeed , but full of signification , which S. P E T E R knewe right vwell, and vwell vnderstood of vvhat force and efficacy it vvas. The trovvinge of the cock had little auailed to his compunction and conuersio, had not the countenance of C H R I S T our Sauiour bene adioyned. Whose eies did speake and vvorke that stupendious chaunge, the certainty of vvwhich, not only the flowing teares of S. P E T E R , but of our blessed Sauiour himselfe did suffiently testifie.

After all these iniuries consider, vvhat C H R I S T did suffer, vvhen he vvas bound to be scourged at the pillar, for the iudge vvhen he savve , that he could not pacifie the fury of those infernall monstres , he thought good to aduise the, to beate him vvith roddes and vwhippes. Wherby his vvholl bodie might be torne, hopinge that vvay to molifie their obstinate and obdurate hearts : that vvhen they savve him so torne and mangleled , they vwould ceafe fur-

further to desire his cruell death.

Enter novve my soule in spirit, into the house of P I L A T E , and haue teares in readines , for thou vvilt haue neede of them , if thou shalt diligently consider, vvhat vvas done there.

Behould hovv inhumanely these abiect and infamous roagues spoyled our blessed Sauiour of his garnétes. Marke the humilitie of C H R I S T , hovv he suffered himselfe to be stripped , not so much as opening his mouth , nor vutteringe any vword against their iniurious behauiour. See his sacred body bound to the pillar vvith many ropes, in such a fassion that on euerie side they might haue roome to torture him.

Consider, hovv our Lord of Angels stood alone in the middest of his cruell enemies , vvithout any Aduocates or Procuratours that vwould defend his cause, yea altogether vvithout any one man, vvhoso at leastvvise a farr of, vwould so much as cōpassionate the bitternes of his tornétes. Doest thou not heare the noise of roddes and vwhippes wherwith they loaded, teared and rent the delicate fleshe of I E S V S , addinge stroke vpō stroke, and vvound to vvound ? doest thou not see his vvholl body in one short moment of time , vvith the

the vehemency and often iteratinge the blowes , to be couered as it were with one ulcer , his skin to be dravvne from the flesh , and blood from his vvholl bo-
dy , from the crovvne of his head to the soles of his feete , to flovve dovyne vpon the earth ? especially , is it not dreadfull for thee to behould the place betvixt the shoulders , vvhерupon al-
most the vvholl force of all the blosvves did light ?

Consider howv C H R I S T the Sauiour of the vworld , after that extreame cruelty of his tormentours , vvent vp and dovvne the Pallace all tornē and cutt, seekinge and gathering vp his garmentes , not findinge one amongst those inhumane rascalls, that vwould shevv vnto him the least act of humanity , in vvashinge or refreshing his vvoundes , or lend their hand to help him to putt on his cloaths. All these things are vvorthy of our diligent consideration, that therby vve might stirr vp our soules to due compassion of his miseries.



A Meditation far Thursday.

T His day thou shalt meditate , howv C H R I S T vvas crovvned vwith thornes , his presentation before all the people, his condemnation, his bringinge out to the place of execution , and last of all his caryinge of his Crosse.

The Spouse in the Canticles inuited vs to the consideratiō of these tormētes, when she saide: *Egredimini filie Sion & videte Regem cast. 3.*

S A L O M O N E M in Diademate , quo coro-
nauit eum Mater sua in die desponsationis eius , &
in die letitiae cordis eius: Goe forth yea daugh-
ters of Sion and see Kinge S A L O M O N in
the Diademe vvhervvith his Mother hath
crovvned him , in the day of his despou-
sing,e and in the day of the ioy of his heart.

What doest thou doe? vwhat doest thou thinke my soule? my toungue vwhy art thou silēt? O sweet Sauiour whē I opē mine eies,
and behould this sorrowfull spectacle, my
heart is rēt vwith greife. What, Lord, vvere
not thy former tormētes,imminētdeath, and
aboundāce of thy blood already shed,suffi-
ciēt for the redēptiō of mankinde? but thou
must yet be crovvned vwith sharp thornes?

My soule that thou Maiest the better un-
derstād this fadd spectacle, sett before thine
eies our blessed Sauiour,in his former beutie
be

before he suffered these tormentes? Then behould him on the contrary in this miserable state. If in the first, thou doest rightly veiwe him, thou shalt see him more beutifull then the sun. In his eies a comely grauity, in his speech a gratiouse facility: in his actions singular modesty: in the gesture of his wholl body profound humility, ioyned with reverent Maicety.

Then after thou haft satiated thy soule with pleasure, in behoulding this rare peece of admirable perfection, then tourne thine eies againe, and looke vpon him, as he is in this present miserable state. Ridiculously cloathed in purple, bearinge in his hand a reede for a Kingely Sceptre, and vpon his head a Crowne of sharpe thornes, in steade of a regall Diademe, his eies were dimmed, his face pall and wan, souled and couered with the filthy spittles of the Iewes: behould him within, and without: his heart consumed with greife: his body torne with wouides and blowes, forsaken of his disciples, hastened to vndergoe death of his enemies, mocked of the Soldiars: despised of the highe Preists: reiected as a wicked Kinge arrogantly assuming this title: vniustly accused, and destitute of all humane aide.

Doc

Doc not consider these thinges as done and past many yeares since, but imagine with thy selfe, that at this present they be in actinge before thy face; nor as an other mans sorrowes, but as thine owne afflictions, sett thy selfe in his place and coniecture what tormentes thou shouldest suffer, if thy head were boared to the skull and thy brain-pan pearced with sharp thornes? But what doe I say thornes, when thou canst scarce endure the prick of a small needle? howe great then was the paine, his tender head suffered, with this newe and vn-heard-of torment.

The Coronatio of our blessed Sauiour, with many mockes and scornes being ended the iudge produced him before the people, saying: *Ecce homo: Behould the man.* If yea thirst after the death of the man, behould him scarce a heares bredth distat from it, yea he is brought to that pase, that he deserueth rather commiseration, then your enuy, if yea feare that he will make himselfe a Kinge, behould he is so deformed, that he scarce reteineth the shape of a man: doe yea feare any violence from these hands that are so straightly manicled? doe yea dreade any harme frō a man that is cast into such a miserable and dejected state, whose body is so mageled and weakened?

Con-

Cōsider, ô my soule, in what state thy Sauiour was, when the very iudge himselfe, did thinke with this aspect, would moue his bloody enemies to compassion : from vvhich vve may gather , vwhat a miserable thinge it is, to see a Christian of such an obdurate heart , vvhich can or vwill not condole the passions of our Sauiour, vvhen they vvere such , that the very iudge did thinke them sufficient, to mollifie the malice of his enemies. But P I L A T E seeinge vwith thees exceedinge tormentes , he could no vway temper or asvvage their fury , vvent into his Pallace satt in the iudgment seat to pronounce the definitiue sentēce against C H R I S T. Novve the Cross vvas prepared at the dore and the fatall standard vvhich thretned ruine to our blessed Sauiour , vvas novve in a readines.

The sentence beinge pronounced vwith the addition of more tormentes, they loaded his vwearied shoulders vwith a heauy Crosse,to carry to the place of his execution.

But our meeke Lord , not only not reicded it, but out of that immense charity tovwards vs , vvhervvith he suffered for our sins, obediently and vvillingly embraced it.

Novv

Now the innocent I s A A C with his weake shoulders, supported the intollerablie burthen of the Crosse to the place of sacrifice. The simple people and devout women , followed him weeping. For who was able to conteine teares,to see the Lord and Kinge of Angels goinge thus on foote,with the extremity of tormentes,his knees quueriuge, his body stoopinge, his eies blinded , his face besmeared with blood , his head crowned with thornes, and his eares deafened with the noise of droomes and trumpetts ?

Leaue a while, ô my soule, this horred spe ctacle,& with wateringe eies, with sobbes, and sigthes goe to the blessed Virgine, and lay to her. Lady of Angels, Queene of heauē, Gate of Paradise, Aduocate of the world, Sanctuary of sinners, Health of the iust, Joy of the Saintes, Mistresse of vertue, Mirrour of purity , Symbol of chastity, Patterne of patience, and Rule of all perfe ction. O me miserable and vnfotunate, what haue I scene with the eies of faith ? Howe could I liue to behould so inhurnane vstage, interrupting sigthes will not permitt me scarce to speake , howe I left thy only begottē Sōne, loadē vwith a mighty Crosse, to vvhich he vvas presently to be nayled, and carryinge it to the place of execution.

What

What heart, what minde, what soule, is able to comprehend the dolour, the blessed Virgine M A R I A then did suffer? her heart fainted, and a dead sweate with extreame anguish possessed her wholl body, and presently she had giuen vp the ghost, had not the diuine dispensation reserved her, till better times, for her greater merite, and more abundant reward.

The blessed Virgine, with speed followeth the steps of her beloved Sonne, that ardent desire wherwith she was inflamed to see him, added vigour to her, of which sorrowe had bereaued her: she heard a farr of the noise of armes, the concourse of people, and the sound of trumpets, on euery side publishing the passion of C H R I S T, after that she sawe the glitteringe of launces and holbeards: in the way she found his footsteps sprincked with drops of blood, by which without any guid or leader she might easily find the way. Approachinge to her Sonne, she lifted vp her eies swelled with teares, to behould him, whome she esteemed dearer then her owne soule.

O what strife was there in the soule of this blessed Virgine, betwixt feare and loue? she did vehemently desire to see her Sonne, but on the other side she durst not

cast

cast her eies vpon him in this lamentable and afflicted state. At length when she drew neerer, these two celestiall lights beheld each other, their eies pearted catch others soule, but greife enforced their tongues to silence, notwithstanding their heartes did mutually discourse, and the Sonne vnto the Mother said: Sweet Mother, why comest thou hether ony loue, my doue? thy sorrowe reneweth my miseries, and my tortmētes crucifieth thy soule? retoune, retourne againe into thy house, This defiled company of theeuers and murtherers beseemeth not thy virginall purity. These and the like words they inwardly vttered, all the way vntill they came to the place of execution.

A Meditation for Fryday.

T His day thou shalt meditate vpon the misterie of the Crosse, and the seauen wordes which C H R I S T spake vpon it: Rouze vp my soule and duely ponder this great misterie of the Crosse, which brought fourth the fruite of satisfactiō, to expiate that great losse, which all mankind suffered by a tree.

Consider how, before our blessed Sauiour came to the Mount of Caluarie (to make his death more ignominious) his

F cruell

cruell tormenters stripped him of all his cloathes, except his coate, which was without scame, behould howe patiently this mecke lambe suffereth his garmentes to be taken from him, not so much as openinge his mouth or speakeinge one worde against their barbarous dealinge. He permitted these thinges willingly, but with a great straine to modesty. He was stripped naked that we might receiue a better garment, to couer the nakednes of our sins, then that of A D A M the first parent of all mankind, made of the leaues of fig-trees to couer the nakednes of his body.

Some Doctours thinke that the crowne of thornes was taken of, to pull with more facillitie his vnsceamed garment over his eares and after to be fastened on againe, which could not be without a vehement paine, the sharp thornes did a fresh wound his sacred head with vnspeakable torment. And surely this is not vnlke, seeing in the wholl time of his paßion they spared him in nothinge; but the bitterest tormentes they could deuise, they heaped vpon him, especially when the Euangelist saith, they did to him whatsoeuer they would. This coate did so cleave to the woundes of his sacred body, by reason of the congregated blood, that when the barbarous hangmen drewe

drewe it of with exceeding violence, they renewed againe the woundes of I E S U S, they pulle of with it many particles of flesh, so that the wholl body of C H R I S T, in every part fleyed and bloody, from the head to the foote seemed to be but one entiere and continuat wound.

Weigh well with thy selfe (my soule) the immenle goodnes and mercy of God, manifested in these tormentes, behould he that spreadeth the heauens with cloudes, vesteth the greene and pleasant feilds with flowers, and he that liberally bestoweth cloathinge vpon every creature, behould him I say starke naked. Consider what cold, this pretious body, beinge wounded, suffered, when they had not only spoyled him of his garmentes, but his very skin was not entiere, neither were his woundes bound vp, but exposed to the iniury of the aire.

If S. P E T E R, being well clothed could not ouercome the cold of the fore-paſſed night: What cold doest thou thinkē this delicate body suffered being in euery place wounded and all naked?

Then consider how C H R I S T was fastened to the Crosſe, and what torment he suffered, when the sharp nayles pearced the most ſenſible parts of his tender body;

Weigh with thy selfe that the blessed Virgine, which beheld these thinges with her eies, and hearing, the frequent blowes of the mallet, which they iterated in driuinge the nayles into the handes and feet of her Sonne, was not vnſensible, but the heart of the Mother was pearced with the handes and feete of the Sonne.

When C H R I S T was made fast vpon the Crosſe, presently they lifted it vp, and put it into a hole there before prepared, behold how these wicked torterours of innocēt I E S V S pricked forward with their owne malice, lett the heauy Crosſe fall into the hole with such a violence, that it ſo much strained his body hanginge only by the nayles, and rent wider the woundes of his handes and feete.

Sweet Sauiour ca there beſtound a heart ſo hard and ſteely, which is not molified at ſuch a ſpectacle, when the very ſtones did cleaue in ſunder, as ſenſible of thy cruel tormentes?

O Lord, the dolours of death compafſed thee round about, the ſtormes and waues of the raginge ſea enuironed thee on euery fide. The waters entred into thy ſoule, thou didest dēſcend to the deepe abyſſe, where thou couldſt find no footinge. When thy heauenly Father did forſake

fake thee, Lord, what couldſt thou expect, thine enemis would doe? they cried out againſt thee, and thy freindes did wound thy heart, thy ſoule was ſad and heauy, nei ther was there any that would cōfort theo.

Lord, from theſe vñheard-of tormentes, and aboundāt ſatisfactiō which thou haſt made for my ſins, I cannot but acknowledge with all humility the greiuiousnes of my heinous transgrefſion, which were the occasions of all thy miseries. I ſee thee my King and God fastned vpon a wodden Crosſe, with two yron nayles; thy preitious and tender flesh to be ſtretched without any manner of reſpite. If thou wouldeſt a little eaſe thy ſelfe vpon thy feete, the weight of thy wholl body enlargeth their woudes: if thou wouldeſt leaue the burthē to thy hāds, the weight of it doth likewiſe rend their woundes; thy ſacred head could find no reſt becauſe thou haſte no other pillowē the ſharpe crowne of thornes.

O virgine Mother howe willingly wouldeſt thou haue embracē him in thine armes, therō to eaſe and reſt himſelfe a little. But the armes of the Crosſe would not permitt the, vpon which, if he would repoſe the ſharpe thornes strooke deeper into his head: the troubles of the ſoane were much augmented by the preſence

of the Mother ; which no lesse crucified his soule then [the Ievves his body to the Crosse.

O syweet Iesu, in one day thou didest carry a double crosse, the one vpon thy body, the other in thy soule, the one of passion, the other of compassion, the one pearced thy body vwith nayles of iron, the other thy soule vwith nayles of sorrowe. What tongue is able to expresse, vwhat thou didest suffer to see the anguish of thy Deare Mother ? vwhose soule thou didest certainly knoyve to be crucified together vwith thee ? vwhen thou didest behould her heauy heart, pearced vwith the syword of sorrowe : vwhen vwith bloody eies thou didst looke vpon her beutifull face, pale and wan: and didst heare the sightes of her dyinge soule, lamentinge that she could not dye. What didst thou suffer to see purg fountaines of teares gushinge from her eies, and to heare her pittifull complaints she made in sorrowinge for thy suffringes.

Ther consider the seauē vwordes vwhich Christ spake vpon the Crosse, to his heauenly Father, sayinge : *Pater ignosce illius quis hescit quid faciunt* : Father forgiue them for they knowe not vwhat they doe. To the Theefe : *This day thou shalt be*

vwith

vwith me in Paradise ; To his Mother: Woman behould thy Sonne. To the people he said : I thirst. And to God againe: My God, my God, vwhy hast thou forsaken me. *Consummatum est* : It is consummated. In to thy hands I commande my spirit.

Ruminat, my soule, vwith vwhat exceedinge charitic, he made intercession to his heauenly Father, for his enemies and persecutours. With vwhat piety and mercy he receiued the penitent Theefe into his fauour. With vwhat affection he committed his Mother to the protection of his beloued disciple : vwith vwhat ardour he testified himselfe vehemently to thirst after the saluation of mankind. With vwhat clamour he thundered out his prayer, expresseinge to the diuine Maiestie the grieuousnes of his tribulations. Howe perfectly he fulfilled the obedience, enioyned to him by his heauenly Father. And lastly howe he yealded his soule into his blessed handes.

Euery one of vwhich vwordes doe afford vs a great deale of matter for our instruction. In the first, vve are taught, to loue our enemies : in the second, mercy to vwordes sinners : in the 3. piety to vwordes our parents : in the fourth, to thirst after our neighbours saluatiō: in the fift, vwhen

we are oppressed with tribulations , and seeminge as it were to be left of God, to fly to prayer : in the sixt, the vertue of obedience and perseveriance : in the seauenth, perfect resignation into the handes of God , which is the sume of all perfection.

A Meditation for Saterday.

THIS day thou shalt meditate vpon the pearcinge of our blessed Sauiours side with a speare : the takinge downe of C H R I S T from the Crosse : the lamentations of the women : and other thinges which did occur about his buriall.

First take notice, how that C H R I S T, after he gaue vp the ghost vpō the Crosse, his enemies much reioyced at his death. But yet there was not an end of their infatiate cruelty , but still their encreasinge malice raged against him being dead. They diuided and cast lotts for his garnétes, and with a speare pearced his pretious side.

O barbarous caitifes ! ô adamantine heartes! did you thinke those tormentes he suffered before his death were not sufficient , that you would not vouchsafe to spare him beinge dead ? what madnes did possesse your soules ? lift vp your eies and be-

behold his dead face, his eies sunck , his hanginge head, and his wholl body beinge wan and pale. Although your heartes be harder then adamant, yet let this pittifull aspect molifie them.

Behould the centurian stroock à launce into his sacred side vwith such violence, that the very Crosse did tremble, out of whose side did gush abundance of blood and water, for the redemption of all mankind. O riuier of paradise rüninge forth to water the wholl earth! O pretious wound which rather the loue thou dideſt bare to vs ſinfull men, then the enemis weapon did inflict! O gate of heauen, windowe of paradise, place of rest , tower of fortitude, ſanctuary of the iuft, neaſt of doues, tombe of pilgrimes , flouriſhinge bed of the ſpouse! Haile ſacred wouđ, which pearceſt deuout heartes, haile roſe of incredibile beaute, haile pretious ſtone of inestimable valour, haile dore, through which , lieth open a free paſſage to the heart of C H R I S T, an argument of his loue , and pledge of eternall felicity.

Consider that in the eueninge , I O S E P H and N I C O D E M U S came with ladders to loſe and take downe the body of our Sauiour : but the blessed Virgine after all these tormentes , perciuinge her Son-

Sonne to be taken from the Crosse , and disposed for the graue , she tooke him whē he was let downe, in her armes, humbly beseechinge that holy company , that they would suffer her to come neere his body , and to bestowe her last kisse and embracinges vpon him , which vpon the Crosse she could not doe. Which they would not , nor could deny. For if her freindshaddeprived her of him dead, which her enemies did her of him livinge , they had redoubled the anguish of her soule.

When she sawe her Sonne in this case, what greife , what dolours can we imagine she then did suffer ? Angels of peace come and lament with this blessed Virgine, lament heauen, lament starres, lament all creatures of the vworld. She embracod the mangled body of her beloued Sonne, she hugged him in her armes (for louē admistred this strēgh) she thrust her face amongst the thornes to come to kisse his mouth , vwherby she vvounded her face vvith the sharp pricks vwhich she vvashed vvith flowinge teares ;

O syueet Mother , is this thy beloued Sonne ? is this he vvhome thou didest conceiue vvith great glorie, and bringe fourth vvith great ioy? is this that bright mirrour in vwhich thou vvert vvont to see thy selfe? all

all that were present did likewise mourne, the other M A R I E S, which were there mourned, the noble-men lamented , heauen and earth with all creatures mourned with the blessed Virgine.

That holy Euangelist lamented , who often embracinge the body of his deare Master , said : O my good Lord and Ma- ster, who shall hereafter teach and instruct me ? with whome nowe shall I consult in doubtfull occasiōs? vpon whose lapp shall I now rest my selfe ? who shall now reueale vnto me celestiall secrete? what sud- daine change is this ? yeasterday I rested vpon thy sacred breſt , where thou didſt communicate to me the ioyes and glory of euerlastinge life, and nowe in recompence of that benefit I embrace thee dead in my armes? is this that countenance which I beheld glorious and transfigurated vpon the mount of Thabor ? is this that face which I sawe brighter and more glitte- ringe then the sun ?

And that blessed sinner S. M A R Y M A G D A L E N lamented , who often kissinge the fecte of her Sauiour, said : O the true light of mine eies, the only reme- die and solace of my soule. If I sinne againe, who shall hereafter receive me into fauour? who shall defend me from the ca- lum-

lunies of the Pharisies? O how altered are these feete from those I washed with my teares? O beloued of my heart, why doe I not dye with thee? O life of my soule, how can I say, I loue thee, when I liuinge, see thee dead before me?

Thus this blessed company did mourne, and lament, wateringe with abundant teares the body of I E S V S. The sepulchre beinge ready, they spiced his holy body with sweet splices, they wrapped it vp in a fine linnen cloth, bound his head with a handkercher, laied it vpon a beere, carried it to the place of buriall and put it into a newe monument.

The monument was couered with a stone, and the face of M A R I E obscured with a cloud of sorrowe. When there againe she bad her Sonne adue, she then began to be more and more sensible of her solitude. For then she savve her selfe, to be depriued of the greatest good. But her heart remained buried vwith her treasure in the graue.



A Meditation for Sunday.

THis day thou shalt consider and meditate of the descent of C H R I S T to lymbus Patrum: his resurrection: diuers ap-
paritions to the blessed Virgine M A R I E; S. M A R I E M A G D A L E N E, and his other disciples: and last of all his glorious ascension into heauen.

Take notice therfore of the incredible ioy, the Fathers, vvhich vvere detaine in lymbus, felt at ther cominge of the redeeme vwho came to free them from the darke prison, vwherin they vvere shutt for many thousand yeares. What prayses, vwhat giuinge of thankes did they render to him, vwho had brought them to the longe desired hauen of their saluation? they vvhich retourne from the east Indies, are vvoit to say, that they thinke all their forepassed labours vwell bestovved, only for that ioy they finde, the first day of their arriuall into their country. If the banishment of a yeaer or two, and the tediousnes of a little trouble some iourny, can breed such ioy in men, vwhat vwill the absence of three or foyvre thousand yeares doe frō that pleasant and celestiall country. What ioy therfore doe vve thinke, those holy Fathers had, vvhcn they tooke possession of it?

Then

Then consider the excessive ioy of the blessed Virgine, when she sawe her Sonne risen from death, when it is most certaine, and vndoubted, that she felt the greatest sorrowe and affliction at his ignominious death and passion that could be, her ioy must needs excell the rest, in his triumphat resurrectio. How great doest thou thinke was her content and pleasure to see her Sonne, whome she greuously lamented before his death, liuinge, glorious, and attended with a ioyfull trop of holy Patriarches, whome he brought a longe with him? What said she? what did she? with what kisses did she salute him? with what affection did she embrace him? what pleasant riuers of teares distilled from her eies? how earnestly did she desire to followe her Sonne, had it been permitted to her?

More ouer take notice, of the ioy of the holy M A R I E s, particularly of her which stood weeping, at the Sepulcre of C H R I S T, then, when she sawe him whome her soule loued: without doubt she cast her selfe at his feete, when she beheld him liuinge, whome she sought amongst the dead.

After his Mother, he therfore appeared to her, who loued him most ardently, and, aboue

aboue others, sought him most diligently and perseverantly, to instruct vs that when we looke for God, vve must seeke him vwith teares and diligence.

Consider that after this, he appeared to his disciples going vnto E m a u s, in the habit of a Pilgrime; behould, how curteously he ioyned himselfe a companion to them: howe familiarly he conuerred vwith them: howe handsomely he dilembed his person: and after, vwith what affection he manifested himselfe vnto them, and last of all howe he left their tounges and lippes filled vwith the delightfull discourse of his Maiestie. Let thy discourse and talke, be like these disciples, as they traualled in the vway, of the loue and passion of our blessed Sauiour; and I dare be bould to say, that he vwill not deny vnto thee his sacred presence.

In the mystery of our blessed Sauiours ascension, first consider that he deferred it for forty dayes, that in the meane time often appearinge to his disciples, he might instruct them, and vwith them discourse of the kingdome of heauen. For he vwould not forsake them by ascendinge into heauen, before he had disposed their mindes to ascende vwith him spirituallly.

Hence vve may note, that those are often depriued of the corporall presence of C H R I S T, and of sensible deuotion, vwho vwith the vvinges of contemplation fly vp to heauen and feare no danger. Wherin the diuine prouidence, vvhervwith it curbeth & gouerneth the elect, doth vvon-derfully manifest it selfe, hovve it streng-
neth the vveake, exerciseth the stronge, giueth milke to little ones, prepareth stronger meat for great ones, comforteth some, afflieteth others, and to conclude accomodates himselfe to all accordinge to their seuerall degrees in their spirituall profitt. Wherfore he that is roborated by diuine comfort, ought therfore not to presume of him selfe, seeinge this sensible consolation, is but the meat for infirme ones, and a great signe of vweaknes: nor he that is exercised by affliction, ought therfore to be deiecte, seeinge temptation is for the most part, a testimony of a valiant minde.

C H R I S T ascended vp to heauen, in the presence of his disciples, that they might be vvittnesse of this mystery, of vwhich they vvere eie-beholders, none can giue better testimony of God almightyees deedes, then he vwhich hath learned them by ex-
perience: vvhersfore he that vwould cer-
tainly

tainly knowe, how good, howe sweet, and mercifull he is towarde his, and what is the force and efficacy of his diuine grace, loue, prouidence, and spirituall consolatiōs: lett him aske those, which indeed haue had experiance of them, for they, and only they, will giue him the best instruc-
tions and satisfaction.

More-ouer C H R I S T would ascend, his disciples lookinge vpon him, that they might prosecute him with their eies and spirit, that they might haue a cordiall fealinge of his departure: that in his absence, they might feare to remaine alone, and that they might the better dispose themselues to receiue his holy grace. The Prophet H E L I E V S, when H E- 4. Reg. 2. I A S was to be taken and separated from him, desired that he would giue him his spirit, H E L I A S made answere: *Rem quidem difficultem postulasti, attamen si videris me, quando tollar à te, erit tibi quod pe-
titii; Si autem non videris, non eris.* Thou hast asked a hard thing: neuer the lesse if thou see me when I shall be taken from thee, thou shalt haue what thou hast asked: but if thou see me not, thou shalt not haue it.

In like manner they shall be heires of the spirit of C H R I S T, whome loue

G doth

doth cause to mourne, for his departure: to whome his absence doth seeme greuous, who earnestly whilst they liue in this banishment, desire his holy presence. Such a Saint was he that saied: thou art gon my comfortour, without any care of me , at thy departure thou didest blesse thine, and I sawe it not ; the Angels promised, that thou shouldest retourne againe , and I heard them not. Who is able to expresse or vnderstand the solitude , trouble, cries and teares of the blessed Virgine , of his beloued disciple , S. M A R I E M A G D A L E N , and the other Apostles: when they sawe C H R I S T to be pulled from them, who together with him carried vp their affectionate heartes? and yet notwithstandinge it is saied of them , that they retourned with great ioy into Hierusalem : the same loue and affection which made them bewaile the visible losse of their beloued Lord and Master , did likewise cause that they congratulated eatch other ; much reioycinge at his glory, for it is the nature of true loue, not so much to seeke the comoditie of it selfe, as the honour and comodity of the person that is beloued.

Last of all to close vp this meditation, it is left to vs to consider , with what glory, with what ioy, this noble conquerour was brought

brought into that heauenly city: what solemnities were then instituted in the glorious Paradise, howe magnificently was he enterred by those celestiall citizens? what a delightfull spectacle was it, to see men accompanied with Angels, to goe in procession , and to sett vpon those seates, which for many thousand yeares, were vacant. But a most rauishing: ioy it was, to behold, the sacred humanity of C H R I S T I E s v s , farr transcending al others, to sett at the right hand of his eternall Father.

All these thinges are worthy of thy attentive consideration , that thou maiest learne, that the labours thou doest vndergoe for the loue of God , are not spent in vaine , therfore he that humbled himselfe vnder all creatures, it was requisite that he should be exalted aboue all; that the louers of true glory may trace this path , they must expect if they desire to be aboue all, that first they be subiect to all, euen their inferiours.



C H A P. V.

Of six thinges necessary to prayer.

TH E S E are the exercises and meditations (Christian Reader) wherwith euery day thou Maiest feed thy soule, which if thou doest rightly use, thou wilt neuer want matter, to busey thy minde devoutly. But thou must note, that meditation, if it be well performed, ought to consist of six partes. Some of which goe before, others followe mentall prayer.

*Prepara-
tion.* First before we apply our selues to meditation, it is necessarie, that our minde and soule be diligently prepared to this holy exercice. As the stringes of an instrument, except they be before-hand well tuned, will neuer make a pleasant melody.

Reading. After preparation ought to followe the readinge of some holy mystery, accordinge to the distribution of dayes in the weeke, which in younge beginners is cheifly necessary vntill with continuall use

of Meditation.

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use and custome, matter of meditation offereth it selfe vnto their memories. Then insist vpon the matter to be meditated vpon. To meditation we must ioyne devout and sincere giuinge of thankes to God for all his benefits: then a generall oblation of all the life of C H R I S T, for recompence of any benefit, and our owne workes to the honour and glory of God. Last of all, petition, which is cheifly called prayer, wherin we desire all things necessarie for our owne saluation, of our neighbours, and the good of the wholl Church.

These six partes are required to mentall prayer, which besides other comodities they minister abundant matter of meditation, seeing they sett before vs diuers sortes of meates, that if one will not relish our spirituall tast, we may fall vpon another: if we be deficient in one; in another we may employ our mindes, and kindle our deuotion.

But in euery meditation, neither all these partes nor order is alwayes necessary: although, as I said before, to younge beginners, it is. That they should haue a certaine methode, accordinge to which they are to guide them selues, wherfore in that which hath, or shall be said, my intention

is not to sett downe a generall rule , or immutable perpetuall lawes , the violatinge of which should be a fault , but my meaninge is, to introduce , and bringe in, younge beginners and nouices into the right way, and methode of meditation: which when they are once in vse , experience , but especially the holy Ghost will better informe them.



CHAP. VI.

*Of the preparation necessarie
to prayer.*

IT will not be besids our purpose to hādle all these partes severally, we will therfore first beginne with preparation which we did put first.

He therfore which goeth about to meditate , after he hath placed his body after a decent manner, either kneelinge, or standinge, or composinge himselfe in manner of a Crosse, or prostratinge himselfe vpon the ground, or sittinge, if infirmitie or necessitie doth so require, lett him first signe himselfe with the signe of the Crosse, then let him recollect the dispersed powers of his soule, especially the imagination , and sequester it from all temporall and transitoric things. Lett him eleuate his vnderstandinge to God , considering his divine presence, with that due reverence and attention as is requisite , and lett him imagine God Almighty himselfe to be prefente in his soule , as in verie deed hee is.

If it be the morninge meditation, after a generall act of contritiō, for his sins, let him make to God a generall confessiō: if in the cueninge let him examine his conscience, concērninge all his thoughtes, wordes, and workes, of that day: of the forgetfulnes of God Almighty his benefits , and of the sinnes of his former life, humbly prostratinge himselfe in the sight of the diuine Maiestie in whose presence, he now is after a particular māner, sayinge the wordes of the Patriarch A B R A H A M : *Loquar ad Dominum meum, cum sim puluis & cinis: Shall I speake to my Lord, seeinge I am but dust and ashes.* And singinge this Psalme. *To thee haue I lifted vp mine eies, yvhich dyvellest in the beauens. Behould as the eies of seruantes, are on the handes of their masters. As the eies of the handmaide on the handes of her mistresse: so are our eies vnto our Lord God vntil he haue mercie on vs. Haue mercie on vs, ô Lord, haue mercie on vs: Glorie be to the Father, &c.*

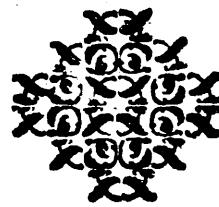
Gen. 18.

22.2.

Cor. 2.6

And because we are not able of our selues to thinke any good, but all our sufficiencie is from God, and because none can say Lord I E S V S, that is to say, call vpon the name of I E S V S , without the holy Ghost, to thee therfore, ô holy Ghost, doe I turne my selfe , with teares imploringe thy

thy assistance: *Come holy Ghost send fourth from beauen the glitteringe beames of thy true light: Come Father of the poore, come giuer of revvardes, come light of our heartes, sweet comforter, sweet guest of the soule, sweet refreshinge, rest in labour , temperature in heat , in mourninge a gratafull solace, ô blessed light , replenish the heartes of the faithfull.* Then followeth the prayer. *Deus qui corda fidelium, &c.* These beinge said, he shall pray to God to bestowe vpō him his diuine grace, to assist at this holy exercise, with that attentio. due recollection , feare and reuerence, beseechinge so great a Maiestie, hūbly beseechinge him , so to passe ouer this time of holy prayer , that he may retourne from thence fortified with new feruour , to execute what soeuer shall belorange to his holy seruice, for prayer which beareth not this fruite, is luke-warme , imperfect and of no moment before God.



C H A P. VII.

Of Readinge.

AFTER a due preparation, followeth readinge of those things which are to be meditated vpon. Which must not be too hasty but mature, serious and quiet, to which the vnderstandinge must not only be attentiuē, to vnderstand those things which are red: but also, and cheifely the will: that those things which are understood may giue a spirituall gust and sealeinge. When he falleth vpon any place, which much moueth his affection, lett him there pause a while, that in his heart it may cause a greater impressio. He must also beware not to spend too much time in readinge therby to hinder meditation, it being a more fruitefull exercise, forasmuch as thinges attentiuē considered pearce more inwardly, and produce greater effects. If peraduenture some time it happeneth the mind so to be dispersed, that it cannot settle it selfe to prayer, then it is better to insist a while longer in readinge, or to ioyne readinge to meditation, or after the readinge of one point

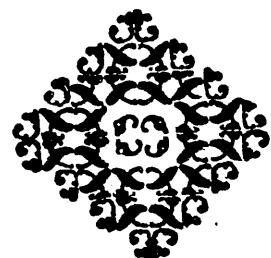
What to doe when the mind is distractē.

of Meditation.

point to pause vpon that a while, then after the same manner to proceed to the others. Although the vnderstandinge tyed to certaine wordes which are red, cannot so freely be carried into diuerse affections, as when it is free from this bond.

It is oftentimes very profitable for a man to vse some violence to himselfe, to expell his vaine and triflinge fancies after the example of the Patriarch I A C O B, manfully to wrastle against them, persecutinge vnto the end, after which fight, the victorie beinge obtained, God doth for the most part, giue greater deuotion, or more pure contemplation, or some other supernaturall gift, which he never denieth, to those who faithfully fight in his cause.

In putting out of vngodly thoughts violence is to be vse.



C H A P. VIII.

Of Meditation.

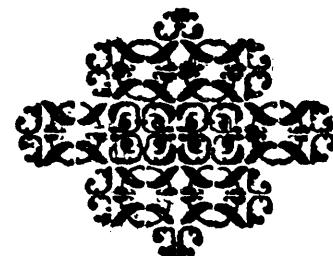
AFTER readinge followeth meditation. Which is some times of such thinges as can be represented to our immaginatio: as the life and passion of our blessed Sauiour: the latter iudgment, hell, and the Kingedome of heauen. Sometimes of such thinges as are subiect rather to the vnderstandinge, then immagination, as the consideration of God Al-mighties benefits, his bounty, clemency and other perfections which are in God.

These meditations are called, the one intellectuall, the other immaginarie. Both which in these exercises are to be vsed after a different manner, as occasion requireth. When the meditatio is immaginarie, so that the thinge meditated vpon, hath, or euer had, any actuall existance or beinge, vve must so frame and represent it to our fancie, as though vve vvere present in the same place, and sawe vwith our eies those thinges, vvhich there vvere done. This representation vwill make the consideration of

of Meditation.

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of these thinges, more viuacious, and cause a greater impression in our soules. For if our immaginatio can comprehend wholl cittyes and countryes, with lesse difficulty, can it comprehend one mysterie. This helpeth much to the recollection of the minde: this will retaine the same busied in it selfe, as a bee in the hyue, where she worketh and disposeth all things diligently. But in these thinges a moderatio must be vsed, for to run with a violent immagination to Hierusalem, to frame to the fancie those thinges which are to be meditated there, doth oftentimes hurt the head. Wherfore it is good to abstaine from immoderate immaginations, least nature oppressed with too violent apprehensions, becomes infirme and weake.



C H A P.

C H A P. IX.

Of giuinge of thankes.

AFTER meditation followeth giuinge of thankes, the occasion of which must be taken from the matter meditated vpon ; for example if the meditation be of the passion of our Sauiour , we must giue thankes vnto him that , he hath redeemed vs from so great tormentes. If of sinnes : that, with longanimitie he hath expected vs to doe penance. If of the miseries of this life: that he hath preserued vs from the greatest part of them. If of death : that hereto he hath defended vs from the perills of sodaine death , and hath fauourably granted vs time of penance. If of the glory of Paradise ; that he hath created vs to that end , that after the stormes and troubles of this present life , we should enioy eternall felicity , after this manner, we are to proceed in other meditations.

To

of Meditation.

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To these benefits , we may ioyne the others which we handled before , to wit, the benefits of our creation , conseruation, redemption and vocation. As much as in vs lieth , lett vs giue him thankes that he hath created vs after his owne image and likenes , that he hath giuen vs a memorie to remember him , an vnderstandinge to know him , and a will to loue him. That he hath committed vs to the custodie of Angels , that by the help of our Angel Guardian , he hath exempted vs from many daungers, preserued vs from many mortall sinnes, defended vs from death and malice of the deuill , while we were in this case (which was no lesse, then to free vs from euerlastinge death , to which by sinn we were obnoxious.) That he would vouchsafe to assume our nature vpon him , and for our sakes suffer a most ignominious death. That we were borne of Christian parentes; that we were regenerated by Baptisme : that in this present life he hath promised grace , and vnspeakable glory in the world to come : that he hath adopted vs for his Sonnes : that in the Sacrement of confirmation , he hath fortified vs with stronge weapons to fight against the world , the

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the flesh, and the devill; that he hath given himselfe to vs in the Sacrament of the aul-ter: that he hath left vnto vs the Sacramēt of penance, to recover that grace which was lost by mortall sin. That he hath vi-sited vs dayly with good and holy inspi-ration: that he hath giuen vs grace to per-seuer in holy and pious exercises.

After the same methode we must pro-ceed in accountinge other God Almighties benefites, as well generall as particular, and for all publicke or priuate, manifest or secret, giue him thankes: and we must in-vite all creatures celestiall and terrestiall to bare vs company in this holy exercise: sing-inge the songe of the three children:

Dies 3. *Benedicite omnia opera Domini Domino: lauda-te & superexaltate eum in secula, &c.* And

Psal. 102. *Benedic anima mea Domino: & omnia que intra me sunt, nomini sancto eius: Benedic anima mea Domino: & noli obliuisci omnes retributiones eius. Qui propitiatur omni-bus iniquitatibus tuis: qui sanat omnes infirmi-tates tuas. Qui redimit de interitu vitam tuam: qui coronat te in misericordia & miserationibus.*

My soule blesse thou our Lord: and all things, that are with in me, his holie name. My soule blesse thou our Lord: and forget not all his retrIBUTions. Who is pro-pitious to all thine iniquities: who healeth

all

of Meditation.

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all thine infirmities. Who redeemeth thy life from deadly falling: who crowneth thee in mercie and commiserations.

CHAP. X.

Of Oblation.

CORDIALL thakes beinge given to God, presently the heart brea-keth naturally into that affection, which the Kingly Prophet D A V I D felt in himselfe when he said: *Quid retribuam Psal. 115. Domino: pro omnibus que retribuit mihi?* What shall I render to our Lord: for al things that he hath rendred to me? Which desire we shall in some sort satisfie, if we offer to God whatsoeuer we haue. First therfore we must offer to God our selues, for his perpetuall seruātes,wholly resigninge our selues to his holy will, howsoeuer he shall please to dispose of vs. We must likewise direct, all our thoughtes, wordes and wor-kes, whatsoeuer we shall doe or suffer, to the supreme honour and glorie of his sa-cred Name. Then we must offer to God the Father, all the merits of his only be-

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gotten Sonne, all the labours and sorrowes he did vndergoe in this miserable world, to fulfill the will of his heauenly Father, begininge from his natiuicie, and hard manger, to his contumelious crucifyinge and giuinge vp the ghost: for as much as these are all the goods and meanes, wherof in the newe Testamēt, he hath left vs heires; wherfore, as that is no lesse our owne, which is giuen vs freely, then that we get with our industrie: so the meritts of C H R I S T, which he hath freely bestowed vpon vs, are no lesse our owne, then if we had got them with our sweat and labour.

Hence cuery man may offer this sacred oblation, as the first, numbringe one by one all the labours and vertues of the life of C H R I S T, his obedience, patience, humilitie, charitic, and his other vertues, seeinge these are the most excellent of all oblations, that we can offer to God.



CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

Of Petition.

THIS noble oblation being well performed, we may securely and confidently proceed to the askinge of any gifts and graces. First therfore God Almighty is to be prayed vnto, with inflamed charitie and ardent Zeale of his diuine honour, for the conuersion of all nations, that all people may be illuminated with the knowledge of him, praysing and adoringe him as the only true and liuinge God. To this end from the bottome of our heartes we may vtter the wordes of the Kingely Prophet: *Confiteantur tibi populi Deus: confiteantur tibi populi omnes:* Let people, ô God, confesse to thee: let all people confesse to thee. ¶ 66.

Then we must pray to God for the Prelates of the Church, the supreme Pastour, Cardinalls, Archbishops, Bishops and other Prelates, that he would be pleased so to gouerne and illuminate them with the light of his heauenly grace, that they may be able to bringe all men to the knowledge and obedience of their creatour.

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We must also pray to God for Kinges and Princes (as S. PAUL E admonisheth) and for all men placed in dignitie, that by their diligent care, their subiects may liue à quiet life , well instructed with honest manners, for this is gratefull to God, that willett all should be sauad , and come to the knowledge of his truth.

Then for all the members of his mysti- call bodie , for the iust that he would be pleased to conserue them in their sanctitie. For sinners , to conuert them, from their wicked courses, to the amendment of their liues. For the dead, that he would free them from the expiatinge tormentes wherin they are detained , and bringe them to their eternall rest.

We must pray to God, for the poore infirme captiues , band-slaues or others in whatsoeuer tribulation , that for the merits of his Deare Sonne , he would vouchsafe to help, and free them from all their miseries.

After we haue prayed for the good of our neighbours, let vs at length intreat for our owne necessities, which discretion will teach every one in particular (if he be not altogether ignorant of himselfe) what they are. But that we may set doun a methode for beginners, we will lead them into

this

this path way. First therfore we must pray to God , that for the merits and passion of his only begotten Sonne ; he would pardon our sins, giue vs grace to auoide them , and to expiate them with good workes worthy of penance; but especially to implore for help and assistance against those euill inclinations and vices to which we are most propence , layinge open to our heauenly physition all the woundes of our diseased soules , that with the oyntment of holy grace , he would heale them.

Then let vs aske, for the most excellent vertues wherin the wholl perfection of a Christian man consisteth , for example, faith,hope,charitie,feare,humilitie , patience , obedience , fortitude in aduersitie, pouertie of spirit,contempt of the world, true discretion, puritie of intention , and others like to these , which are placed in the supreme top of a spirituall buildinge. Faith is the prime roote and foundation of a Christian: hope is a staffe to defend vs from all tribulations of this present life: charitie the end of all perfection: feare of God , the beginninge of true wisdome: humilitie is the Basis and ground-worke of all vertues : patience is the strongest armour against the fury of our enemies:

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all vertues : patience is the strongest ar-
mour against the fury of our enemies:

obedience is the most gratafull oblation to God, wherin man offereth himselfe for a sacrifice, discretion is the eie of the soule, fortitude the hand therof, wherwith it bringeth all her workes vnto perfection: purity of intentiō directeth all her actions vnto God. We must after pray for other vertues, which may help vs forward in the way of perfection: as, sobriety in meate and drinke, moderation of the tongue, custody of the senses, modesty and composition of the outward mā, sweetnes in giuinge good example to our neighbours, rigour and feuerity towardes our selues, and the like.

Last of all we must conclude this petition, with a fervent imploringe of the diuine loue, and heere to pause a while, so that the cheifest part of time be spent in an earnest desiringe of this grace and fauour, seeinge in the diuine loue all our felicitie doth consist, to that end this prayer followinge will not be vnpromitable.

A prayer for the obtayninge of diuine loue.

Grant I beseech thee, ô Lord, that I may loue thee with all my soule, with all my heart, with all my strength, ô my only hope, my perfect glorie, my refuge and

and solace. O my dearest of all freindes, sweet spouse, flourishinge spouse, sweeter then any hony. Delight of my heart, life of my soule, ioy of my spirit. O bright day of eternitie, cleare light of my bowels, paradise of my heart, originall of all my good, ô my cheifest strength, prepare, ô Lord, in my soule a delicious bed, that accordinge to thy promise, there thou maist dwell, and make thy mansion. Mortifie in me whatsoeuer is displeasinge to thee, and make me a man accordinge to thine owne heart. Pearce the marrowe of my soule. Wound my heart with the darteres of deare affection, and inebriate me with the wine of loue.

When shall I perfectly please thee in all thinges? when shall I cast from me all thinges contrary to thee? when shall I be wholly thine? when shall I leaue to be mine owne? when shall nothinge liue in me, but what is thine? when shall I embrase thee with ardent affection? when wilt thou inflame, and consume me with the flames of loue? when wilt thou pearce and replenish me on euery side, with thy sweetnes? whē wilt thou lay open and manifest to my pouerty, that pretious Kingdome which is within me, that is to say, thy sacred selfe with all thy riches? when

wilt thou vnite me perfectly vnto thee ? when wilt thou transforme and swallowe me vp wholly in thee , that from thee I may neuer depart ? when wilt thou remoue from me all obstacles, which hinder me that am not one spirite with thee. O be-loued of my soule ! O delight of my heart ! Looke downe vpon me and heare me, not for my owne merits, but out of thy infinite goodnes : instruct, illuminate, direct, and help me in all, and through all , that I neither speake or doe any thinge , but that which I shall knowe to be gratefull before thy sight.

O my God, my loue, my ioy, my pleasure, my fortresse and my life ! why doest thou not help the poore and needy , imploringe thy affiance ? thou which fillest heauē and earth, why doest thou suffer my heart to be empty ? thou which cloathest the flowers and lilies of the feildes with beauty : thou which nourishest the birdes of the aire : thou which susteinst the least creature of the earth : why art thou vnmindfull of me, that forgetteth all things for the loue of thee. O immense goodnes ! I had knowledge of thee too late , that I loued thee no sooner. O newe and ancient beauty ! O miserable was my state when I liued without thy loue ! O wretched was

my

my condition, when I knewe thee not ! ô intollerable blindnesse of my heart vwhen I savv thee not ! I sought thee farr abrood, vvhē thou vvert vwithin me. Yet at length, though late, I haue found thee, let not thy mercy suffer me , ô Lord, that euer I for-sake or leaue thee againe.

And because to haue eies to see thee is one of the cheefest thinges that pleaseth thee, Lord , giue me the eies of a solitarie turtle, to contemplate thee, giue me chaste eies full of modeftie : humble and amo-rous: sanctified and vveeping: attent and discreet eies vvhich may vnderstand and performe thy vvill. Lord giue me grace to behold thee vwith such eies , as thou maiest looke vpon me againe , as thou diddest vpon P E T E R , vwhen he denied thee, and diddest moue him to bitter compun-ction for his sins. Looke vpon me as thou diddest vpon the prodigall childe , vwhen thou diddest runn to imbrace and kisse him: Or as vpon the Publican, not daring to lift vp his eies to heauen. Behold me vwith those eies that thou diddest inuise MARIE MAGDALENE to penance, and to vwash thy feete vwith teares. Or vwith those eies vvhervvith the Spouse in the Canticles incited thee to her loue vwhen thou saydest : Quam pulchra es amica Cant. 4.

mea,

mea, quam pulchra es! oculi tui columbarum!
Hovv beautifull art thou my loue, hovv
beautifull art thou! thine eies as it vvere of
doues.

That my aspect be pleasinge, and that
the beautie of my soule be gratefull vnto
thee, doe thou I beseech thee bestovve the
gift of vertues and graces vpon me, to
deck and trim my selfe, wherby I may liue
to glorifie thy holy name for euer and
euer.

O mercifull and holy Trinitie! Father,
Sonne, and holy Ghost, one only true
God, teach, direct and help me in all.
O Father omnipotent, I beseech thee by
the greatnes of thy immense povver, to
confirme and strengthen my memory in
thee only, and to replenish it vwith holy
and pious cogitations. O Sonne most
vvise, illuminate my small vnderstandinge
vwith thy eternall vvisedome, to knovv
thy euerlastinge truth, and my ovne mi-
serie. O holy Ghost loue of the Father and
the Sonne, vvith thy incomprehensible
goodnes make my vvill conformable to
thy diuine pleasure, inflame it vwith such a
fire of thy holy loue, that no waters which
rise from the turbulent feare of euill sug-
gestions, may be able to extinguish it.
O holy Trinitie and one God, I would to
God

God I could doe nothinge else but prayse
and loue thee, and as much as all thy holy
Saintes. I would to God I had the loue of
all creatures in me alone, I would with a
willinge minde trasferrand tourne it to the
loue of thee, although this were nothinge,
in respect of what thou deseruest. Only
thou thy selfe, canst worthily loue and
praise thy selfe. Because none else besides
thee, is able to vnderstand thy incompre-
hensible goodnes, and therfore the iust
poise of loue resideth only in thy sacred
breast.

O bleffed Virgine Marie, Mother of
God, Queene of heauen, Lady of the
world, Mansion of the holy Ghost, Lilly
of purity, Rose of patience, Paradise of
pleasure, Mirrour of chasfity, Vessell of
innocency, intercede for me miserable ba-
nished wretch, and bestowe vpon me a
portion of thy abundant charity.

O all yea Saintes of God, and yea angel-
call Spirits, which burne with a vehement
affection of your Creatour, especially yea
Seraphins, who inflame both heauen and
earth with loue, doe not forlase my mis-
erable soule, but purifie it as you did the
lippes of EsAY from all vice and vncleanes,
and set it on fire with the flames of your
ardent loue, that I may loue and seekc our
Lord

Lord God, restinge and remaininge in him
for euer and euer. Amen.

CHAP. XII.

Certaine documentes to be obserued about Meditation.

HE T H E R T O we haue only set downe plentifull matter for meditation, which for the present is verie necessarie, because the greatest part of men, either neglect or disdaine this exercise, because they want sufficient matter to consider vpon; nowe we will briefly handle those thinges which pertaine to the forme and methode of meditation, of which, though the holy Ghost be the principall master, neuer-the-lesse experiance teacheth vs, that certaine documentes are likewise necessary, because the way to heauen is cragged and full of difficulties, wherfore ther is need of a guide, without which, many haue gone astray a longe time from the right path, or at leastwile, haue not attained to their desired end, so soon as they expected.

The

The first Document.

THe first Document therfore is, that we doe not so adheare to those thinges, which aboue we haue digested into seuerall pointes, and times, as that we should thinke it a fault, to fall vpon other thinges, wherin the minde may reape more abundant fruit, for seeing deuotion is the end of all those exercizes, that which cometh nearest to this scope, is alwayes to be accompted best. Which ought not lightly vpon every occasion to be done, but with a cleare and manifest profit.

The second Document.

WE must be wary of too many speculations in this exercise, and vse rather efficacious affections of the will, then curious discourses of the vnderstandinge: wherfore they goe not in the right way that meditate of diuine mysteries, as though they were to preach them to the people in a sermon: which is rather to dissipate, then recollect the spirit. And to wander abroad, the to be busied in their owne home. Therfore he that will meditate with fruit to his soule, must come to it, like an humble simple creature, bringinge rather awill

a will disposed to tast these holy mysteries profitably, then acrimony of vnderstandinge to discusse them learnedly. For this is proper to those who giue themselues to studdies , not to those who consecrate themselues vnto deuotion.

The third Document.

IN the precedent Document we declarid , how the vnderstandinge is to be moderated and subiected to the will, nowe we will prefix some limits to the will , out of which she cannot straggle without a fault. That therfore she be not too immoderate in her exercise, we must knowe, that deuotion is neuer to be expressed with the violence of our armes, as some doe thinke, who with cōstrained sorrowe doe wringe out teares and commisfation , while they consider the tormentes of C H R I S T I E S v s: for this doth rather dry the heart, the make it capable of diuine visitatiōis (as C A S S I A N V S doth excellently teach) more ouer this extraordinarie force, doth often hurt the body, and by reason of the burthen, which this violence bringeth with it, the mind is left so nauseous that it feareth to retourne againe to these exercises: when experiece teacheth, that it is the cause of so much

much trouble, he therfore that will fruitfully meditate vpō the passion of C H R I S T, let him not be too anxious for sensible cōmiseration, but let it suffice, that he exhibieth himselfe present to his sufferinges, beholdinge them with a simple and quiet eie, and consideringe them with a tender compassiue heart, rather disposed to entertaine that affection which God almightyes mercy shall suggest , then that which shalbe wronge out with violence. Which when he hath done, let him not be solicitous nor sorrowfull, what other things God doth deny or will not giue.

The fourth Document.

HENCE we may gather what attentio, is to be obserued in prayer , wherfore the heart must not be languishinge, remisse or deiected ; but quicke, attentive and eleuated to heauenly things. And as it is necessarie to come to God with such attention, eleuation of the minde, and abstraction from sensible things ; so it is no lesse necessarie to temper sweetly this attention , that it be neither hurtfull to bodily health , nor impediment to extinguish deuotion. For when any be so intensiue to the matter they meditate vpon , without any respect to their infirme nature,

ture, doe oftentimes so dull their braines, that they be vnapt for other exercises. On the contrarie, there are some, to auoid this danger are so remisse and lasy in their attentiō, that easilly they suffer their mindes to be distractē with other idle thoughts

These two extremes, that they may be both auoided, such moderatiō is necessarie, that the head be not weakened with too violent attention, nor the thoughtes permitted carelessly to wander out of supine negligence, in which thinge, we must immitate a good rider vpon an vntoward horse, vvhich neither holdeth him in too hard, nor looseth the raines vpon his neck, but guideth him equally, that he giueth not back, nor goeth forvvard too speedily. So vve must striue in meditation that attention be moderate, diligently resistinge euill thoughtes, but not violent vwith anxiety.

We must note also, that, these thinges vve here speake of attention, are cheefly to be taken heed of in the beginninge of meditation: for it often happeneth, that, those vvhich are too violent in the beginninge, doe founder in the middest of meditation. As trauailers makinge too much speed in their settinge forth, are tired in the middest of their iourny.

The fifth Document.

A Mongst all documentes this is cheifly to be obserued, that when in meditation we cannot presently perceiue that sweetnes of deuotion we expect, not therfore to wax pusillanimous, or leue of from the excrise begun, but patiently with longanimitie expect the cominge of our lord: seeinge it besemeth the excellency of the diuine Maiestie: the vility and balenes of mans condition, the importance of the busines we haue in hand, to stay a while before the gates of his sacred pallace: If he cometh presently after a little expectation, with many thankes let vs with gratitude entertaine this vndeserued fauour: If he maketh longer delaies, let vs humble our selues before him, and confesse that we doe not deserue this grace: If he vouchsafeth not to come at all, let vs bare it patiently with a quiete mind, and content our selues, that we haue offered our selues, with all we haue vnto him for a gratefull sacrifice: that we haue denied our owne proper wills, resigninge the vnto his Power: that we haue crucified all our inordinate appetites: that we haue fought against our passions and vices. And finally

I that

that we haue performed whatsoeuer was in our power to be done. And althoough we haue not worshiped him with sensibile deuotion. Yet let it suffice vs, if that we haue worshiped him *in spirit and truth*, as he requireth.

Last of all, let vs perswade our selues, that this is the most dangerous and cheifest to be feared rocke of this present nauigation, and place, wher in the true and faithfull seruantes of God are tried, and distinguisched from infidells, from which if we shall depart in safety, in all others, we shall haue a prosperous successe.

The sixth Document.

THIS document not much differeth from the former, which not withstandinge is equally necessarie, and this it is, that the seruant of god must not content himselfe, that he hath felt a little sensibile gust from meditation; as many doe, when they haue shed a little dry teare, or felt a little molifyng of the heart, that they haue attained to the scope and end of this exercise.

But they are farr deceipted, for euē as to make the earth fruitfull one little shewer which

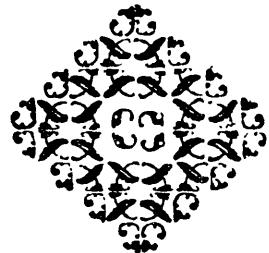
which alaieth the dust, is not sufficient, but it must haue a great deale of raine throughly soke into the rootes of the plantes, before it can giue any hopes of a fruitfull yeare: so the abundance of celestiall waters, are necessarie to our soules for to make them bringe fourth the fruit of good workes. Wherfore we are not with out cause admonished by spirituall men, that we should spend as much time as possible we can in this holy exercise, and it is better to insist some longe time together, then by fitts. For when the time is short, it wilbe almost all consumed, in quietinge the immagination, and recollecting the heart. and it often happeneth, that whilst we should reap the fruit of our former trouble, meditation is quite broke of.

Concerninge the prefixed tyme for meditation, it seemeth to me, what soeuer is less the two howers, or an hower and halfe, is to little for this exercise, because almost one hower is spent in tuninge the instrument of our soules, repressinge idle and vnprofitable thoughts, and recollectinge the minde from temporall things: and some time also is necessarie to spend in reapinge the fruit of our prayer in the latter end.

Although I cannot deny, but after some
I 2 pious

pious action the mind is better dispos'd for meditation: for as dried wood quickly burneth, so the mind that is well dispos'd, is sooner kindled with this celestiall fire.

The morninge also is the best time for meditation, because the mind is then most free from fancies, and therfore can with better facilitie apply it self to this holy exercise. But who by reason of the multiplicity of outward affaires, cannot spend so much time, yet at leastwise let them, with the poore widdowe in the ghospell, offerr vp to god the small mite of their sincere affection. And no doubt but he who prouideth for all creatures accordinge to their seuerall necessities, will graciously accept it, if their culpable negligence doth not deserue the contrarie.



The seauenth Document.

THE seauenth document is, that he that is visited with diuine consolations in, or, out of prayer, ought to haue a speciall care to spend that time; aboue other, with fruite vnto his soule, for whilst this prosperous gale doth blowe, he will goe further in his iourny towardes heauen in one hower, then other wise, he hath, or shall doe in many dayes. So did the holy Father S. FRANCIS doe of whom S. BONAVENTURE writeth that he had such a sollicitous care of diuine visitations, that when soeuer vpon the way he was recreated with them, he would either goe before, or stay behind his companion a while, vntill he had digested this diuine morsell sent vnto him from heauen. They which are negligent and carlesse to answere diuine visitations, are comonly chastised with this punishment from God, that when they seeke, they will hardly find them.



The eighth Document.

THE last Document and of greatest moment is, in this exercise of prayer we must ioyne meditation to contemplation, seeinge one is, as it were a ladder vnto the other: wherfore it is the part of meditation, with diligent attention to consider and ponderate celestiall thinges, first one, then an other, that at last some pious affection may be stirred vp in the soule, like him that with a steele striketh fire out of a flint: but it is the property of contemplation which followeth meditation, to enjoy this kindled fire, that is to say, to embrace that affection, vwhich vwith much labour he hath sought and found, in deep silence and tranquillitie of spirit, not vwith many discourses and speculations of the vnderstandinge, but vwith a pure simple relation and eie to veritie, hence a certaine doctour faith, that meditation doth discouse vwith labour and small profit, but contemplation vwithout any trouble, and vwith much fruit: the one doth seeke, and the other findeth: the one doth chewe, and the other eateth the meate: the one doth reason and consider, the other contemplates those thinges the loues and tasteth, and in fine the one is

the

of Meditation.

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the meanes, the other is the end: the one is the way and motion, the other the tearme of the way and end of the action. From these thinges which we haue laid, that rule or axiome is very frequent amongst spirituall Masters, which fewe of their schollers doe rightly vnderstand. That is, *fine adepto media omnia cessare*. The end beinge attained vnto, all meanes doe cease. For example, the mariner resteth when he hath arived to his desired hauen. So he that meditates, when by the meanes of meditation he shall come to the rest and sweet gust of contemplation, ought to leaue the cragged way of reasoninge and discouse, contentinge him selfe, with the memorie of godalmightie alone, whome he may behold as present to his soule, and quietly enjoy that sweet affection, which he shall vouchsafe to bestowe vpon him, whether it be of loue, admiration, ioy, or the like, and the reason is, because the end of this busines consisteth rather in loue, and affection of the will, then in speculations of the vnderstandinge. When therfore the will hath captiuated the one, and attained to the other affection: all reasoninge and speculations of the vnderstandinge are to be left: that the soule may bend all her forces to it, without a confused wanderinge

I. 4

to the actions of the other powers. Therfore a certaine doctour giueth this counsell to those who perceiue the selues to be inflamed with the fire of diuine loue, that they should quite abolish all other thoughtes and speculations, though never so sublime and subtile, not that they are euill, but because for the present they hinder a greater good. And this is no other, then after we haue come to the end, to leaue meditation for the loue of contemplation.

Which we may doe (to speake particularly of this matter) in the end of euery exercise (that is to say) after the petition of diuine loue, as aboue said: and that for too reasons, first because it is supposed that the labour of the finished exercise hath produced some fruite of deuotio towardses God almighty, as the wiseman saith, *melius est finis orationis, quam principium.* Better is the end of prayer, then the beginninge. Secodly it is expedient, that, after labour in prayer, the vnderstandinge rest a while, and re-create it selfe in the armes of contemplation.

Heere let euery one resist what soeuer immaginations shall present them selues vnto his minde, let him still his vnderstandinge, let him fasten his memorie strongly vpon

vpon god, contideringe that he is placed in his holy presence. But let him not adheare to any particular contemplation of God, but only content himselfe with that knowledge, which faith hath ministred vnto him: and to this let him add his will and affection, seeinge this is only that which embraceth God, and in which the wholl fruite of meditation consisteth. The weake vnderstandinge is little able to conceiue, or comprehend any thinge of God, but the will can loue him verie much.

Let him therfore rouze vp himselfe from temporall things, and let him recollect himselfe with in himselfe (that is to say) to the centre of his soule, where is the lively image of god, here let him harken attentively as though he heard God almighty speakeinge from a high turre, or as though he held him fast being present in his soule: or as though there were no other persons in the world, besides God and himselfe.

Nay I say more, let him quite forget him selfe, and those thinges which he doeth: for as one of the ancient holy Fathers saith, prayer is then euery way compleat, when he that prayeth doth not consider that he is before God in prayer. And this is to be done not only in the end of the exercise, but in the middest and in euerie

part of meditation. For as often at this spirituall sleepe shall sweetly oppresse any one (that is to say) when the vnderstandinge is drowned as it were in a sleepe, (but the will watchinge) let him quietly enjoy this delicate meate as longe as it shall last.

But when it is digested, let him retourne againe to meditation, in which we must behauie our selues like a gardiner, who, when he wattereth a bedd of his garden, after he hath once sprinced it with water expecteth a while, vntill it be drunke in, then sprincketh againe, that at last it may throughly wett the earth, That it may become more fruitlefull. But what the soule cast into this heauenly sleepe, and illuminated with the splendour of this eternall light, doth enjoy! what facietie, what chariti, what internall peace! no tongue is able to expresse: this is that peace which exceedeth all vnderstandinge, this is that felicitie, a greater then which cannot be imagined in this vale of miserie: there are many so inflamed with this fire of diuine loue, that their interiours, at the verie memory of this blessed name without any meditation at all befor, doe rest in ioy.

These need no more consideration or discourses, to loue god, then a mother needes

des motiues to loue her child, or the bride her husband. Others there are so absorped in God, not only in prayer, but also in outward busines, that they wholly forget the selues, and all creatures for the loue of him. neither are these effects of diuine loue to be admired, seeinge worldly loue causeth often times greater matters in the mindes of men, that it makes them madd. What shall we attribute lesse efficacie to grace then vnto nature and sin? When therfore the soule shall feale this operation of diuine loue, in what part of prayer soeuer it happeneth, let him never refuse it, although he spend all the time of this exercise in it without any manner of consideration at all of that point, he purposed to meditate vpon (except he be specially obliged vnto it.) For as saint AVGVSTINE iaignt vocall prayer ought to be left, if it hurteth deuotion, so meditation ought to be differred if it hurteth contemplatiou. But as it is necessarie to leauie meditation for this affection, and to ascend from the lesser to the greater: so often times this contemplation is to be left for meditation, when it is so vehement, that the corporall health, receiueth some damage therby. This oftentimes happeneth to those who taken with the pleasure of this diuine sweetnes, giue them selues

too

too indiscreetly to these exercises, and use them too immoderately, to whome (as a certaine Doctour saith) this vvilbe the best remedy, that they desist from contemplatiō, tourninge their mindes to some other good affection, as of compassion in meditatinge of the sufferinges of our Sauiour. Or about the sinns and miseries of this world, to exonerate the hearte, diuertinge it from that too much intension.



THE



THE SECOND PART.

OF
DEVOTION
 AND OF
THOSE THINGES
 WHICH THERVNTO
 BELONGE.

CHAP. I.

What is devotion.

AMONGST all the troublesome difficulties, to which they who frequent the exercises of prayer and meditatiō, are subiect, none is greater, then that which they suffer from the defect of deuotion, which often felt in prayer.

Deuotion prayer. For if they haue this, nothinge is
maketh more sweet, nothinge more pleasant, no-
all thin- thinge more easie, then to insist to prayer
ges easy. and meditation. But if that be wantinge,
nothinge more hard, nothinge more difficult, nothinge more burthenesome then to
pray. Wherfore seeing we haue already
spoken of prayer, meditation, and the
methode to performe it. Nowe it will not
be besides our purpose to treate of those
thinges which partly promote, and partly
hinder and extinguish deuotion in the
mind of man. As also to lay open the tem-
ptations which are obuious to those who
frequent these pious exercises, and last of
all to annex some certaine documentes,
vvhich may not a little auaile to the vwell
performance of this busines. We vvill
therfore beginne from the definition of
deuotion: that it may manifestly appeare
vwhat a pretious margarite it is, for vvhich
vve vvarr.

Deuotion, as S. T H O M A S saith, is a
virtue vvhich maketh a man prompt and
readie to euerie vertuous deed, and stir-
ringe him vp to doe vwell. vvhich defini-
tion evidently shewveth the necessarie and
vtiltie of this vertue, as conteininge more
in it, then any man can immagine.

For

For the better vnderstandinge of this,
vve must knowve, that the cheifest impe-
diment that hindereth vs from leadinge a
vertuous life, is the corruption of humane
nature, proceedinge from sinne, vvhich
bringes vvhith it a vehement inclination to
vice, and a great difficultie to doe vwell;
this make the way of vertue cragged and
troublousome, although in it selfe consid-
ered, nothinge in this vworld, is so sweet, so
louely, so beautifull.

The diuine wisedome hath ordeined
the help of deuotion, as a most conveni-
ent remedie to ouer-come this difficultie:
for as the north wind dissipateth clouds,
and maketh a cleare skey, so true deuotion
expelleth from the mind, the tediousnes
of this way, and maketh vs with alacritie
prompt to pious actions. This vertue doth
so farre forth obteine the name of vertue,
that likevwise it a speciall gift of the holy
ghost; a heauenly devve, an assistance ob-
tained by prayer, vvhose property is to
remoue all difficulties happeninge in
prayer and meditation: to expell tepidi-
tie: to minister alacritie in the diuine ser-
vice, to instruct the vnderstandinge: to ro-
borate the vwill: to kindle in our heartes
heauenly loue: to extinguish the flames of
vnlavyfull desires: to ingendre a hatred
and

and loathinge of sinne and all transitorie thinges:and last of all to him that possessesteth it, to infuse a newe ferverour, a newe spirit, a newe mind, and newe desires to doe well. For as S A M P S O N as longe as he had his haire, did exceede all men in strength: but when that was cutt he was as weake as others. So the soule of euerie Christian re-created with the help of deuotion, is stonge and valiant. But when it is depriued of it, it becometh infirme and weake.

But aboue all the prayses, which can be heaped vpō this vertue, this is the cheifest, that although it be but one only vertue, yet it is a prick and motiue to all:they therefore that desire, to walke in a vertuous way must get this for a spurr, for without it, he will neuer be able to rule his rebellious flesh.

Hence it manifestly appeareth, in what the true essence of deuotion doth consist, not in tendernes of heart, or abundance of consolations wherwith they which meditate are often recreatēd except a prompt alacritie of the mind to doe well be therunto adioyned: especially seeinge it sometimes happeneth, the one to be foud without the other, God almighty so disposinge for the triall of his seruantes. Though I can not denie. But that these consolations doe often

In what
deuotion
consisteth.

often proceed from deuotion and promptitude of the minde to doe well, and on the contrarie, that true deuotion is not a little augmented by the same consolations and spirituall gusts. And therfore the seruantes of God may lawfully desire and aske the, not for the delight they bringe with them, but because they doe greatly increase deuotion which maketh vs with alacritie to apply our selues to vertuous actiōs, which the Kingly Prophet testifieth of himselfe sayinge: *Viam mandatorum tuorum curri, cum dilatasti cor meum*: I haue runne the wayes of thy commandementes when thou hast enlarged my heart, that is, when thou hast recreated me with the sweetnes of thy consolations which are the cause of this my readines.

Now let vs treat of the meanes, wherby this vertue is to be attained vnto, which will bringe no small profit with it, for seeinge it is the spurr to all other vertues, to set downe the meanes, wherby it is to be obtained, is no other thinge then to prescribe the meanes to get all other vertues.

C H A P. II.

*Nine meanes or helpes wherby this
vertue of deuotion may be attained
vnto, vwith the least difficultie.*

*Conti-
nuance of
exercise
helpeth
deuotion.*

THE things which promote deuotion are many, of which we will handle a fewe.

First, it helpeth much deuotion: if those exercises be vndertaken with a generous resolution, ready to vndergoe what difficulty soever shall occur, for the obtaininge of this pretious margarite. For it is certaine, that nothinge is excellent which is not difficult, of which kind is deuotion, especially in beginniges.

*Custodie
of the
heare.*

Secondly, a diligent custodie of the heart from euery vaine and vnproufitable cogitation, from affections, strange loue, and turbulent motions, doth much promote deuotion. For it is euident, that euerie one of these, is no little hindrance, seeinge this vertue cheifly requireth a quiete heart, free from all inordinate affection, and so well composed as the stringes of a well tuned instrument.

Thirdly,

of Meditation.

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Thirdly, custodie of the senses: espe- *Custody*
cially the eies, tongue, and eares, seeinge by *of the
senses.*
these the heart is much distracted. For those thinges which enter in through the eies and eares, doe straine the minde with diuers imaginatiōs, and cōsequētly disturbe and trouble the peace and tranquility of the soule. Wherfore one not without cause saied, that he that meditateth must be deafe, blind, and dumbe. For by how much lesse he wādereth abroade, with greater re-collection, will he reioyce at home.

Forthly, solitude helpeth deuotion *Solitude.*
much, for it doth not only remoue the occasions of sinne, and take away the causes which cheifly disturb the heart and senses, but it maketh a solitary man, to rouze vp himselfe from temporall thinges, to be present to himselfe and conuerse incessantly with God. To which the opportunity of the place doth admonish, which admitteth no other societie.

Fifthly, the readinge of spirituall *Readinge*
bookes doth not a little nourish deuotion, *of spiri-
tuall
bookes.*
because it administreth matter of consideration, abstracteth the minde from all thinges created, stirreth vp deuotion, and causeth that a mā doth sooner adheare to the consideration of those thinges, which in readinge offered him a more pleasant

K 2 last,

tast, that, that wherwith the heart abounds may oftner occur to his memorie.

Conti-
nuall me-
mory of
God.

Sixthly, continual memory of God almighty, and dayly immagination of his sacred presence, that alwayes thou art in his sight, with a frequent vse of aspirations which S. AVGVSTINE calleth iaculatorie prayers. For these doe gaurd the palace of the mind, conseruinge deuotion in her feruour: that a man is alwayes willinge to pious actions, and ready to holy prayer: this document is one of the principall instrumentes of a spirituall life, and the only remedy for those, who haue neither time nor place with opportunity, to insist to longer prayer and meditation, and they which doe thus bestowe their labour to frequent aspirations, will in a short time profit much.

Persever-
ance.

Seauenthly, perseveriance in good exercises, that so times and places be duely obserued, especially morninge and eueninge, as fittest times for prayer.

Corporall
austeri-
ties.

Eighthly, corporall abstinence and austerities doe much help deuotion: fastinge from meate: a frugall table: a hard bed: haire cloth: discipline, and the like. As they originally proceed frō deuotio of the minde: so they doe not a little cherish, conserue and nourish the roote from whence they

springe,

springe, which is deuotion.

Laily, workes of mercy are a great *worker* spurr vnto deuotion, because they increase *of mercy*. the confidence we haue to appeare before God, and to be presented before his sacred Maiestie: they doe accompane our prayers: and finally they merite that they be sooner heard of God, especially seeinge they proceed from a mercifull heart.



C H A P. III.

Nine impedimentes of deuotion.

AS there be nine thinges which doe promote deuotion, so likwise there be nine impedimentes that doe hinder the same.

*Veniall
sinnes.* The first impediment of deuotion is, sinnes not only mortall, but also veniall, for these although they doe not quite abolish charitie, yet at leastwise they diminish the seruour of it, and consequently make vs lesse apt vnto deuotion. Wherfore with all diligence they are to be auoided, not only for the euill they bringe with them, but also for the good which they hinder.

*Remorse
of con-
science.* Secondly, remorse of conscience proceedinge from sins, when it is in extremes because it doth disquiete the minde, weakeneth the heade, and maketh a man vnfitt for ractes of vertue.

*Anxiety
of heart.* Thirdly, anxietie of heart and inordinate sadness, for with these, the delight of a good conscience and spirituall ioy of the inward minde, can hardly sute and agree.

Fourthly, too many cares which doe dif-

of Meditation.

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disquiete the mind, like the Egypitian *pre-
fектs* who did oppresse the children of *the mind.* ISRAEL with too immoderate labours: nor will euer suffer them to take that spirituall repose, which they should haue often had in prayer. Yea at that time aboue others they disturbe the mind, endeauouringe to seduce her from her spirituall exercise.

Fiftly, a multitude of affaires, which *affaires.* take vp our whole time, suffocates the spirit, scarce leauinge for a man a moment to employ in Godalmightie his seruice.

Sixthly, delights and pleasures of the *Delights
of the
senses.* for these make spirituall exercises of the senses, for these make spirituall exercises of the senses, recreate with heauenly consolations, for as saint BERNARD saith, he is not worthy of the visitations of the holy ghost that seeketh after worldly solace.

Seauethly inordinate delighte in eatinge *Inordi-
nate de-
light in
eatinge
and drink-
inge.* and drinkinge: especially longe and sumpteous suppers, which make a man vnapt to spirituall exercises. For when the body is oppressed with too much meate, the spirit cannot so freely eleuate it selfe to God.

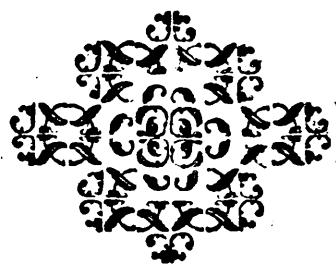
Eighthly curiositie of the senses and *curiosity
of the
senses.* vnderstandinge, as to see sightes and heare newe rumours, because these doe spend

preious time, disturbe and ouerthrough the tranquilitie of the minde distractinge it with many impertinences, which can be no small hinderance to deuotion.

Intermission of exercises.

Lastly, an intermission of our wonted exercisles, except when they are not omitted or differred for a pious cause or iust necessitie. For the spirit of deuotion is delicate: which when it is gone it hardly retourneth againe, at least with great difficultie. For as trees and plantes must be watered in due season otherwise they wither away and perish: so deuotion, except it be watered with the waters of holy meditation, doth easily vanish.

These things we haue set downe breifly, that they may be the better remembred, vse and experience of them will afford a longer explication.



CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Of the common temptations whiche for the most part assault those, whiche giue themselves to meditations: as also of the remedies against them.

Now let vs see with what temptations they which frequent, the exercise of prayer and meditation are molested: that we may prouide conuenient remedies for them. Whiche be these.

1. The want of spirituall consolations.
2. A multitude of vnprofitable thoughtes.
3. Thoughtes of infidelitie and blasphemie.
4. Fancies in the night.
5. Sleepinesse and drowsinesse.
6. Diffidence of goinge forward.
7. Too much presumption of their owne sanctitie.
8. Inordinate desire of learninge.
9. And indiscreet zeale.

These are the common temptations which doe trouble those which would leade a vertuous life.

of

*Of the first temptation, and the remedie
therof.*

*vvhat to
doe in
the time
of drynesse
of spirit.*

TO him that wanteth spirituall cōsolations, this is the remedie, that therfore he omitteth not his customarie exercises of prayer, although they seeme vnsauourie and of no fruite, but let him set him selfe in the presence of God, cominge before him as guilty of many greeuous sins, let him search diligently, the corners of his owne conscience, and consider whether or no through his owne default, he hath lost this grace, if so, let him beseech God almighty to pardon him for this sinne, admiringe the inestimable riches of his diuine patience in toleratinge vs so longe.

By this meanes he will reapre no small fruite from his aridity of spirit, takinge from thence occasion of profounder humilitie when he considereth his owne malice and peruersnes in heapinge vp of sin, or of more ardent affection when he seeth God almightyes goodnes in pardoninge the same. And although he enioyeth no pleasure at all in his exercises, let him not therfore absteine from the continuation of them, for it is not alwayes necessary, that it should be sweet and sauoury to the present

sent tast, which wilbe hereafter profitable. There- Especially when it is often seen by expe- *vvard of
rience that those who constantly perseuer
those
vho in
in their intended exercises, not giuinge the time
over in the time of this aridity, but conti- *of drynesse
nue them with what care and diligence of spirit,
possibly they are able, that these I say, de- *doe not
part from this table recreated with many ther
heauenly consolations, and much spirituall
joy, seinge they find nothinge to be omit- *wanted
ted on their partes. It is but a small matter
to protract prayer for a longe space when
it floweth with consolations, but when
these are taken away, not to desist, is an
admirable act of vertue: for in this humili-
ty shineth, patience is eminent, and true
perseuerance in good workes, is mani-
fested.****

But it is necessary in the time, of aridity, to haue a greater care of himselfe, watchinge ouer himselfe with greater diligence, to discusse his conscience more sincerely, and to obserue all his wordes and actions more accurately. For then when alacrity and spirituall ioy (which is the principall oare of this nauigation) is absent, with greater vigilance the defect of grace is to be supplied.

When thou findest thy selfe to be in this state, thou oughtest to thinke, as S.

B E R-

BERNARD admoniseth, that the sentinells which did watch thee, are a sleepe, that the walls that did defend thee, are broken downe, and therfore the only hope of safegard to consist in armes, when all is gone which did otherwise protect thee, safety is to be sought with an armed hand. O what deserued glory followeth such a soule, which winneth the triumphant lawrell after such a manner, she fighteth a combate with the enemy without either sword or buckler, is valiant without helpe, who although she be alone susteineth the wholl battaile, with as much courage, as though she were compassed round about with troopes of auxiliatorie forces.

This is the cheifest prooфе, wherby the sincerity, and goodnes of the freindes of God is knowne, wherby the true are seuered from false seruantes.

A remedie for the second temptation.

What to
do vvbē
vre haue
vnprofita-
ble
thoug-
hes.

Against the temptation of importune and vnproufitable cogitations which are wont to vex those that pray, and disquiet them with no small molestation, this is the remedie. To resist them manfully, prouided alwayes, that resistance be not

joy-

ioyned with too much violence and anxietie of spirit. Seeinge this worke dependeth not so much of our strength, as God alnighties grace and profound humilitie. Wherfore when any one is besett with these temptatiōs, let him confidently tourne himselfe to God without any scruple or anxietie of mind, (seeinge this is no fault or at least a very small one) with great submission and devotion of heart, sayinge, behould Lord, behould what I am? what other thinge can be looked for frō this ordure but such filthy sauours? What other fruite can be expected from this earth which thou dideſt curse in the beginninge of the world, but thornes and thistles? What good cā it bringe forth, except thou lord doest purge it from all corruptiō? this beinge said, let him retourne to cōtinue his meditations with patience expectinge the visitation of our lord, who is neuer wantinge to the humble of spirit. If yet the tumult of these troublesome fancies doth not ceafe, neuertheleſs let him still resist constantly, repellinge the force of them to the vttermost of his power. From this perseuerant battaile (beleeue me) he will reapre more gaine and merite, then if he had enjoyed the greatest consolations in his meditation.

A remedy for the third temptation.

Tempta-
tions of
thoughts
of bla-
phemey
ought to
be con-
temned.

TO ouercome the temptation of blasphemous thoughtes, we must knowe as there is no temptation so troublesome to a pious mind. So likwise there is none les dangerous. Therfore the best remedie is to contemne them. For seeinge sinne consisteth not in sense, but delight of those thinges we thinke of. But in these there is no pleasure, but rather tortour. Therfore they may chalenge the name of punishment rather then of sinne. And the more vexatiō is in them, the further of we are from consentinge vnto any sinne, therfore it is best not to feare, but contemne them: seeinge feare maketh them more stonge and violent.

A remedie for the fourth temptation.

Against the temptations of infidelitie, he who is vexed with such cogitations, on the one side let him consider the imbecilitie of mans condition, on the other sid the greatnes of the diuine power, to whomo nothinge is impossible: those thinnges which God hath commanded let him alwayes bare in mind; for others let him

newer

of Meditation.

neuer busy himselfe in searchinge curiously the workes of supreme maiestie, ring Gods
vworkes
good breed
ought to
be taken. seeinge the least of them doe farr transcend humane capacity. Wherfore he that deli-
reth to enter in to this sainctuary of Gods workes, let him enter with profound humility and reuerence, endued with the eies of a simple doue, not of a subtile ser-
pent: and let him bare the mind of a meeke disciple, and not of a temerarious iudge, let him put on the shape of a child for our lord maketh partakers of his diuine se-
retes, let him not minde to search or knowe the causes of Gods workes, let him shutt the eies of naturall reason, and open the eies of faith. For these are the hādes wher-
with Gods workes ought to be handled. Humane vnderstandinge is able to comprehend the workes of men, but not of God, seeinge they are not capable of so much light.

This temptation seeinge it is one of the greatest, which doth assault men, and bringeth none, or small delight with it, is to be cured with the remedy of the precedent temptation. That is, to make slight of it, for it cannot staine the soule with any great blemish, because where the will is contra-
rie there is no daunger of any sinne.

A remedy for the fifth temptation.

Feare is
uercome
vwith
fightinge
not vwith
flyinge.

Heré are some who are troubled with many feares and fancies when they goe to pray in solitary places, remote from the company of men , against which temptation, there is no more efficacious remede then for a man to arme himselfe with a curragious mind, perseueringe in his exer-
cise, for this feare is ouercome with fight-
inge , not with flyinge : moreouer let him
consider , that the deuill nor any other
thinge what soeuer else can hurt vs, except
God permitts. Let him also consider, that
we are compassed about with a custody of
Angels, which doe guard vs, as well in , as
out of prayer , they assist vs carryinge vp
our prayers to heauen , they help vs to
bringe to nothinge the deuises of our craf-
ty enemy, and to confound all his mischei-
uous plottes.



A re-

A remedie for the sixth temptation.

TO ouercome sleepe, wherwith some,
that meditate are often molested: we
must consider, that sometime it proceedeth
from mere necessity , and then it is not to
be denied the body what is its due , least it ^{Drovysfi-}
hindreth what is our right. Some times it ^{nesia} ^{prayer ar-}
proceedeth out of infirmite, then he must ^{riseth}
take heede not to vex himselfe too much, ^{from a}
seeinge herein is no sinne at all : but mode- ^{threfold}
rately as much as strength suffereth , resi-
stinge it: nowe vsinge some industry, then
some small violēce, that prayer doth not al-
together perish, without which, nothinge
in this life cā be had secure, but when it cō-
meth out of slouth, or from the deuill, then
there is no better remedy then to absteine
from wine, and not to vse water in aboun-
dance, but as much as quencheth his thirst,
to pray vpon his knees , or after some
other painefull gesture of the body , let
him vse discipline or other corporall au-
sterity to drie sleepe from his eies. To
conclude, the remedy of this, and all others
is , instantly to implore his assistance, who
is ready to giue it to all, so they aske it fer-
uently and constantly.

L

A re-

A remedie for the seauenth temptation.

AGainst the temptations of diffidēce and presumption, seeinge they in them selues be contrary, it is requisite to apply diuers remedies. Against diffidence: let him consider, that we doe not rest vpon our owne merits, but vpon God almightyes grace, who is so much the more willinge to assist man, by how much the more he is diffident of his owne forces, placinge a firme hope in the goodnes of God, to whome nothinge is impossible: the remedy for presumption is, to consider, that the most evident and certaine argument is, that a man is yet furthest from true sanctitie, when he thinketh himselfe to be neerest.

*Man ought
cheifly to
rely vpon
Gods grace
not his
owne
merits.*

More-ouer let him looke vpō himselfe in the liues of saintes, who nowe raigne with C H R I S T, or liue yet in this mortall life, as in a lookiinge glasse, to which of these he doth compare himselfe, he will see, that he is no more then a dwarfe in respect of a giant, which consideration will not a little suppreſſ his pride.

A remeſlie for the eighth temptation.

AGainst the inordinate desire of stu- *The diuine
vriſdome
doth infi-
nitly ex-
ceedhu-
mane pro-
dence.*

die and learninge: it is good to consider how farr vertue exceedeth science: and how much the knowledge of God excelleth humane wisedome. Hence a man may learne how necessarie it is to bestowe more labour vpon one, then vpon the other. More-ouer the world hath all the excellencye that can be desired, but cannot auoyd this misery, that it must end with life. What then more miserable then to seeke after that with so much labour, and expence which so quickly perisheth? If all thinges in the world could be knowne, they are but as nothinge, and therfore it is much better to exercise our selues in the loue of God, the fruite wherof remaineth for euer, and in whome we see and knowe, all thinges. Last of all, in the day of iudgement, we shall not be asked what we haue read, but what we haue done, not how eloquently we haue spoken, but how well we haue liued.

A remedie for the ninth temptation.

The salvation of our neighbour is so to be regarded that we doe not neglect our owne soules.

THe cheifest remedie against indiscreet zeale of helpinge others, is, so to atte-
de to the good of our neighbours, that we
hurte not our selues: and so to haue a care
of the consciences of others, that we
neglect not our owne, but in assistinge the
it is good to referue so much time, as is
sufficient to conserue the heart in deuotion
and recollection. And this is, as S. PAULE
faith: *Ambulare in spiritu*: to walke in spirit,
that is to say that a man be more in God
then in himselfe. Seeinge therfore that
the prime roote of all our good vpon this
dependeth, we must striue, that our prayer
be so profounde and longe, as may con-
serue the soule in deuotion, which every
short meditation is not able to doe, but
deuoute and longe.



C H A P.

C H A P. V.

*Other certaine admonitions necessarie
for spirituall persons.*

THE thinge that affordeth greatest
difficulty in this spirituall iournie,
is, to knowe how to come to
God, and to conuerse with him familiar-
ly. Let therfore none dare to enter into
this way without a good guide, and well
instructed with necessarie admonitions
and documentes, of which we will sett
downe a fewe, accordinge to our wounded
breuitie.

The first is, wherby we are taught what
end we must aime at in these our spirituall
exercises. We must therfore knowe that
since to communicate with God almighty
of it selfe is most delightfull, hainge no
bitternes mixed with it, as the wise man tes-
tifieth: hence it cometh to passe that many
allured with the pleasure of this admirable
and vnused sweetnes (which is greater then
can be comprehended) come to God and
frequent thes spirituall actions, as rea-
dinge, prayer, meditation, vse of the Sacra-
The error and abuse
ment, of some.

ment, for the great contēt and delight they take in them, so that for the principall end wherwith they are moued, is this admirable sweetnes which they vehemently desire. This is a great errour and many are plunged in it, for seeinge to loue and seeke God should be the cheifest end of all our actions, these loue and seeke them-selues, that is to say, their owne gust and sensible delight, rather then God, which was the scope of the contemplatiue Philosophie of the gentills. Especially as a certaine Doctour saith, that this is a kind of auarice, luxurie, and spirituall gluttonie, no less pernicious then carnall. From this errour springeth an other braunch. (To wit) that many iudge themselues, and others accordinge to the ebbinge, and flowinge of consolations, so farr that they are perswaded, that a man is more, or lesse perfect by howe much more or lesse, he is visited with diuine consolatiōs. This is a great mistake.

What should be the end of spiritual exercises.
Against both these temptations this generall doctrine is a remedy: that euerie one must knowe that the scope of all these exercises, and the cheife end of a spirituall life, is the obseruinge of Gods cōmaundemētes, and a perfect fullfillinge of his diuine vwill: to this it is necessarie that our ovne vwill be mortified, that the vwill of God may the bet-

better liue and raigne in vs. Seeinge both these are directly contrarie the one to the other. But this noble victorie seeing it cannot be obteined vwithout speciall fauour and allurementes of God, therfore vve ought to frequent the exercise of prayer, the better by it (and indeed the only meanes) to obteine this grace, and to bringe this serious busines of our soules perfection to a good and desired end. With this intention vve may confidently desire of God internall consolations, as vve haue saied before. This did the Prophet D A V I D vwhen he saied: *Redde mihi Domine letitiam salutaris tui, & spiritu principali confirma me:* Giue me, ô Lord, the ioy of thy saluation, and confirme me with thy principall spirit.

Hence it is manifest, what end euerie one ought to prefix to himselfe in these exercizes, and howe they should esteeme and measure their owne and others profit: not accordinge to the multitude of flowinge consolations. But accordinge to those thinges they haue constantly suffered for God, partly in fulfillinge his diuine pleasure, partly in renouncinge their owne proper wills.

And that this ought to be the end of all our prayer and readinge it appeareth by that one Psalme of the Prophet D A V I D

which beginneth: *Beati immaculati in via, qui ambulant in lege Domini:* Bleised are the immaculate in the way, which walke in the lawe of our Lord. Which is the longest Psalme in the Psalter, notwithstandinge there is not one verse in it, in which there is not mention of the lawe of God, and keepinge his cōmaundemētes. Which the holy Ghost hath so ordeined, that mē may learne to direct all prayer, and readinge to this end and scope. From which they that doe decline, doe cast themselues into the secret snares of the enemy, who with his subtle craft perswadeth them that, that is some great matter which indeed is nothinge, and for this cause men most exercised in spirituall matters doe affirme, the only touchstone of true vertue to be, not that sensible delight which is founde in prayer: but patience in affliction, abnegation of ones owne selfe, a syncere and enteire full-fillinge of the diuine will, and finally in a diligent obseruinge of God almightyies lawes and cōmaundemētes, though I must confess that prayer it selfe, and the frequēt consolatiōs that are founde therin, doe not a little conduce and help to the better effectinge of these thinges fore mentioned.

They which are desirous to knowe how much progresse they haue made in the

the way of God, let them examine how *The figures* much they haue increased in interiour and *by which* exteriorum humility: how willingly they *we may* haue put vp iuriēs, with what minde *hōvē* they haue borne with others infirmities: *much we* how they haue compationated the imper- *have profited in* fectiōns of their neighbours: what confi- *the way* dence they haue had in God in the tedious of perfe- *time of tribulation: how they haue bridled* *tion.* their tongues: how they haue kept their heart: how they haue mortified their flesh with all vnlawfull delightes, and made it subiect to the spirit. With what moderation they haue behaued them selues in prosperitie and aduersitie; With what grauitie and discretion they haue gouerned all their actions: and aboue all how dead they haue beene to the world, with all its pleasures, honours, and dignities: and accordingly as they haue profited in these vertues let them measure their per- fectiōn, and not accordinge to the consola- tions wherwith God hath visited them, wherfore let euerie one be sure to beare one hande and the cheifest ouer himselfe in mortification, the other in prayer, seeinge the one can not be atteined vnto without the other.

The second Admonition.

AS it is not lawfull to desire consolations and spirituall comforts, to that end, that in them we should sett vp our rest, but only as they assist vs in our spirituall progresse, much less is it lawfull to wish for visions, revelations and the like, which to those who are not well grounded in humility, may be a great cause of their vtter ruine, neither is there any reason to feare, that those who refuse or reiect the shold be disobedient to God, because when it shall please God to reueale any thinge, he will doe it after such a fashion, that he to whome such thinges shall be reuealed, shalbe so certaine of them, that he will haue no reason either to feare or doubt, though he shold himselfe never so much striue against them.

The third Admonition.

WE must haue a speciall care, not to speake to others, those sensible consolations, which God almighty hath bene pleased to recreate vs with all. Except it be to our spirituall directour. Hence it is that, that mellifluous Doctour was wont to

to aduise euery one to haue these wordes written in great letters in his chamber : **M Y S E C R E T T O M Y S E L F E : M Y S E C R E T T O M Y S E L F E .**

The fourthe Admonition.

Moreouer we must always take yve good heede to deale with God, ^{must} ~~allways~~ with much humilitie and reuerence, neuer ^{remaine} to esteeme our selues so high in his fauour, ^{in humilitie} as we neglect to cast downe our eies vpon ~~ty~~ our owne basenes, and to shrowd our winges in the presence of so great a maiestie, as holy S. A V G V S T I N E was wont to doe, of whome it is written, that he had learned to reioyce before God with feare and trembling.

The fifth Admonition.

WE haue heretofore counsailed the seruant of God, that he cōfēcrateth some certaine time of the day to recollectiō. But now besids the ordinarie course, we say, that he must some times sequester himselfe from all busines, and emploimēts, as much as is possible, and giue himselfe wholly ouer to deuotion, the better to fatt his soule with the abundance of spirituall dainties, recoueringe his dayly losses, and get-

gettinge newe force to goe forward in his spirituall iourny. Which although it be not amisse to doe at all times , yet more specially , vpon the principall feasts of the yeare : in the time of temptation : after a longe iourny : after troublesome busines, which gaue matter of much distraction, that then we exclude from our soules all exteriour thinges, and call our selues back againe to the point from whence we did digresse.

The sixth Admonition.

There be many which be not discreet in their spirituall exercises, when they enioy heauenly consolations, and it often-times falleth out, that this prosperitie doth expose them to manifest perill , for when God almighty shewreth downe , more aboundingly this celestiall dewe, vpō their soules, they are so rauished with the sweetnes of it, that they addicte themselues without measure to this only exercise : to this end they prolonge the time of prayer, macerate themselues with watchinge and other corporall austerities, so that nature it selfe at length is constrained to sinke vnder the burthen of such indiscreet mortification. Hence it cometh to passe, that many

ab-

abhorre spirituall exercises , and some are not only made by this meanes vnfitt for corporall , but also dull for spirituall labours of prayer and meditation. Wherfore in all these , there is great neede of discretion, especially in the beginninge , when spirituall consolatiōns be more feruent, and commonly whē discretion is least. For we must so order our diet that we doe not faint in the middest of our iourny. On the contrary there be some so slouthfull and vndeouer, that vnder the colour of discre-
tiō, immoderatly make much of theselues, refusinge the least labour, or trouble. This although it be dangerous to all , but especially to beginners. For as S. B E R N A R D saith , it is impossible that he should perseuer longe in a spirituall course, who is discreet at first. That whē he is a nouice esteemeth himselfe wise, and when he is younge gouerneth himselfe like an old man. Neither can I easily iudge which of these , be more dangerous. Except, as T H O M A S A K E M P I S saith , the first is more incurable, for whilst the body is stronge and sounde, there may be hopes to cure tepiditie: but when it is once weakened through indiscretion , it scarce euer can be brought to its former feruour.

The

The seauenth Admonition.

Here is yet an other daunger, more pernicious then the former, which is, that some hauinge experience of this inestimable vertue of prayer, that all the fruite of a spirituall life doth depend vpon it. Hence they perswade themselues, that in it all is contained. And that only, that vertue doth suffice for our saluation, which makes them to neglect other vertues, which are likwise the foundations and proppes which doe vphold a spirituall buildinge, which beinge taken away the wholl fabrick falleth to ruine; wherfore they that seeke after this one only vertue with such indiscreet auiditie, the more they labour the lesse fruite they reap. But the servant of God that expecteth merit and comfort in the way of perfection must not fix his eies so much vpon one only vertue, although it be neuer so rare and excellent, but generally attend to all, as one stringe vpon an instrument maketh no musique, except we strike the rest: so one vertue cannot make a spirituall harmonie in our soules, if the other be wan-

of Meditation.

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wantinge, not vnlke a clock, which if there be but a fault in one whelle, the others will stand. So it is in a spirituall clock, if one vertue be deficient.

The eighth Document.

These thinges which we haue hereto saied, which doe help to deuotion. Are so to be taken as preparatories, wherwith a man doth dispose himselfe to God almighty his grace, and behauie himselfe manfully in his holy seruice, with this caution, that we should not put our confidence in them, but in God.

This I say because, there are some which labour to reduce all rules into art, thinkinge that they haue attaine to the perfection of that exercise, if they obserue exactly the rules therof. But they which put good principalls into practice, vwill quickly atteine vnto their desired end, vwhich doinge, they care not to reduce grace into art, nor to attribute that to humane rules, vwhich is the gift of God. Hence vve say that it is not necessarie to followe these rules, and documentes as dependinge of art, but as instrumentes of grace. Because a man

a man vwill learne thus to knowve, that the principall meanes, vwhich one ought to fecke after, is profound humilitie, vwith the consideration of our ovne basenes, and a great confidence in God almightyies mercie. To the end that vve may come to the knowvledge of the one and the other, let vs povvre out teares vwithout intermission, and continually pray, that as vve expect at the gate of humilitie, so vve may obteine by it, all our desires, and perseuere in humble thankesgiuinge to the diuine bountie, vwithout any trust to our ovne vworkes or any thinge that is ours.

AD HONOREM DEI.

F. I. N. I. S.



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